

CENTRAL ASIA AND TRANSCAUCASIA

Ethnicity and Conflict

Edited by

VITALY V. NAUMKIN

859.956 Review 8/30/1994

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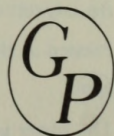
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Contributions in Political Science, Number 339

BERNARD REICH, *Series Adviser*



Greenwood Press

Westport, Connecticut • London

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

Central Asia and Transcaucasia : ethnicity and conflict / edited by
Vitaly V. Naumkin.

p. cm.—(Contributions in political science, ISSN 0147-1066 ;
no. 339)

Includes bibliographical references and index.

ISBN 0-313-29154-3 (alk. paper)

1. Asia, Central—Ethnic relations. 2. Transcaucasia—Ethnic
relations. 3. Former Soviet republics—Ethnic relations.

I. Naumkin, Vitalii Viacheslavovich. II. Series.

DK855.C46 1994

305.8'00958—dc20 93-31624

British Library Cataloguing in Publication Data is available.

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Library of Congress Catalog Card Number: 93-31624

ISBN: 0-313-29154-3

ISSN: 0147-1066

First published in 1994

Greenwood Press, 88 Post Road West, Westport, CT 06881

An imprint of Greenwood Publishing Group, Inc.

Printed in the United States of America



The paper used in this book complies with the Permanent
Paper Standard issued by the National Information Standards
Organization (Z39.48-1984).

10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1

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Acknowledgments

We give special thanks to the United States Institute of Peace, whose financial support enabled us to produce this work.

We are most grateful to Ambassador Robert Oakley for consultations kindly proffered during the writing of this study.

The opinions, findings, and conclusions or recommendations expressed in this publication are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the views of the United States Institute of Peace.

Introduction

The reforms that began in the Soviet Union after the accession to power of Mikhail Gorbachev, the gradual disintegration of the unitary state, and the subsequent collapse of communist regimes in the newly independent republics of the former USSR have created a new reality characterized by an unprecedented dynamism. Although the general tendencies and directions of change seem to have crystallized, they are proceeding at an unpredictable pace.

The deep-rooted crisis that afflicts Soviet society is especially painful in the economic and the ethno-national spheres. And the intensification of these crises has been largely responsible for the escalation of changes in the political sphere. As the interethnic confrontations escalate and the republics demand more extensive rights, the crisis of the old unitarian structure of the multinational state continues to gather momentum. Long-standing but formerly covert interethnic contradictions; collisions caused by arbitrarily drawn boundaries between the republics; enforced deportations of nationalities and large-scale population migrations; the imperfect mechanism of the state system of both the union and each constituent multinational republic, based on the ethno-territorial principle; the people's natural striving for new self-identification once they begin to shake off totalitarian oppression; the trend toward sovereignty that has swept all ethno-territorial formations: all of these have resulted in a complicated and painful development process that sometimes has erupted into acute crisis.

The surfacing tensions have resulted in outbursts of ethnic violence with losses of thousands of lives. The republics' transition to independence has failed to end the critical situation. What is more, the disintegration of the state in some cases has aggravated the confrontation, sharpening the existing

problems and creating new ones. There is now intensified rivalry for land possession, mineral wealth and other resources, and communication control; there are also the beginnings of rivalry in foreign policy. "The parade of sovereignties," accomplished at the union level with the rise of independent states, has reemerged on a lower level—that of the former autonomous units. This was manifested in 1992 in the prevalence of intrarepublican conflicts, resulting from the opposition of the autonomous units and the central administration in the former constituent Soviet republics. Ambitious political leaders and elite political groups have been quick to play on the ethno-territorial differences in their power struggles, seeking to crush their rivals and strengthen their own position.

The nationalistic overtones of the transformation experienced by the Central Asian and Transcaucasian states has proved to be a major obstacle to the establishment of civil society. Quite often the upper crust, representing the titular ethnoses, began to discriminate against the ethnic minorities in the new states, which has barely shaken off the *diktat* of the central authorities. Islam has been effectively used in the Central Asian states as a means of self-identification in everyday life and on the institutional level. Opposition forces acting under the guise of Islam so far have not presented (with the exception of Tajikistan) any serious challenge to the regimes in power, which have been equally eager to assume Islamic overtones while preventing any intrusion of religion into political life. Under the guise of opposition to Islamic fundamentalism, these regimes have become increasingly authoritarian, bringing greater pressure to bear on the democratic forces. Neoconservative authoritarianism in some cases managed to restrain the flaring interethnic tensions and to suppress—perhaps only briefly—the bloody internecine conflict in Tajikistan.

In Transcaucasia, the democratically oriented, noncommunist leaders of Armenia and Azerbaijan have not been able to restrain the conflict between their two states, which today borders on full-scale war. The international organizations that are in charge of extensive negotiations have been powerless to resolve the Karabakh hotbed.

The past few years have demonstrated that the southern part of the former USSR, especially Central Asia and Transcaucasia, is one of the world's most dangerous areas, capable of affecting the international community in an unpredictable way. The dearth of reliable information and in-depth studies on the countries of those two regions, coupled with the covert pattern of local communal life, hampers recognition of the potential hotbeds of conflicts, their prevention, and the search for effective ways of controlling them.

This book examines the root causes and the current stage of ethnic conflicts in the former southern republics of the USSR—those of Central Asia and Transcaucasia—in all their dimensions; determines the part played by the religious factor and the economic situation; reveals the ratio between internal and external factors; offers a classification of these conflicts; assesses efforts to settle the conflicts; examines the possible consequences of such

conflicts in the context of regional and global safety and peace. We have also tried to foresee their likely development, recommend ways to prevent the emergence of similar conflicts, and define optimum ways of dealing with the existing ones. Our purpose is to link such studies to the research carried out under the auspices of the United States Institute of Peace.

Despite the differences between these ethnic conflicts and the regional conflicts of the cold war period, which stemmed from East-West confrontation and had the potential to expand in scope, the former are more than purely local developments for a variety of reasons defined in this book. Although the prospects of direct Great Power involvement appear to be small, the participation of regional powers is a likely possibility, and this enhances the potential danger of these conflicts to global peace and stability. One way these conflicts could "leak" to the global scene would be the involvement of Russia and a destabilized internal political setting in a country with a powerful nuclear and industrial potential; a similar lack of stability could create a real menace in another post-Soviet republic, Kazakhstan, which is still a nuclear state. International and regional organizations are being drawn into the efforts to resolve such conflicts.

When considering the general problems associated with ethnic conflicts in the parts of Central Asia and Transcaucasia, we focused on seven states: Uzbekistan, Kazakhstan, Turkmenistan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Azerbaijan and Armenia. Six of these are members of the Commonwealth of the Independent States; Azerbaijan is not a member state but has close relations with all the former constituent Soviet republics. One more Transcaucasian republic, Georgia, has not been covered by specialized research. The situation in Georgia is marked by a number of specific features. Nevertheless, some chapters of this book refer to the intra-Georgian conflicts, often for the sake of comparison. Similarly, we could not ignore the ethnic conflicts taking place in Russia in the territories adjoining the areas under discussion.

Chapters 1 through 5 deal with the economic, ethnic, political, and international parameters of the conflicts in the seven states. The contributors to this study are research associates of two institutes of the Russian Academy of Sciences—the Institute of Oriental Studies (Irina Zviagelskaia, Alexei Malashenko, Sergei Panarin, and Vitaly Naumkin) and the Institute of Linguistics (Victor Porkhomovsky)—and of Moscow University (Leonid Fridman). Recently they have all come to work also for the Russian Center for Strategic Research and International Studies, a nonprofit organization that enjoys the support of several institutions in both Russia and abroad. Its goal is to study local, regional, and global issues of strategic importance.

USIP support has enabled our group of researchers to conduct the field studies and to process relevant data. Interviews with local political leaders, intellectuals, military figures, and field commanders in different parts of the region—people of a wide ethnic spectrum—provided important clues to an understanding of the situation in the newly emerged states of Central Asia and Transcaucasia.

Historical Origins of Interethnic Conflicts in Central Asia and Transcaucasia

VICTOR YA. PORKHOMOVSKY

Some of the hotbeds of interethnic conflicts in what was formerly the territory of the Soviet Union have existed for several centuries, while others are more recent. Full-scale military actions erupt in some of these areas; in others, political movements and groups expressing certain ethnonational tendencies form. These two situations are the extremes in the range of intensity of interethnic conflicts. All of these situations are in flux, and a conflict can grow in intensity very rapidly, as an example will show.

On December 18, 1992, a ceremony marked the opening of a military township in Vladikavkaz. When its construction began, Vladikavkaz was one of the quietest regions, highly rated in army circles as a good place for service. Today this is one of the hottest spots in the Russian federation. Had an objective analysis of the ethnic situation been made, it could have forecast the ethnic conflict with a high degree of probability.

This chapter contains a historico-typological analysis up to 1985 of the development of the ethnic situation in the southern republics of the former USSR, and it describes the main areas of interethnic tension and their characteristics.

ETHNOS AND THE TERRITORY

There is no clear-cut single usage in Russian tradition of such ethnologic terms as *a people*, *nation*, or *nationality*. Additionally, the Russian usage of these terms differs from those accepted in the West, a problem recognized even at the beginning of the twentieth century.¹ V. Vodovozov has indicated two European terminological traditions, the German and French-English, rightly noting that the Russian terms could have dual (German and French-

English) meanings.² The ambiguity has remained to this day and is used for the purposes of nationalistic propaganda, just as was the case prior to World War I.³ The only essential difference is the preponderance of the English-American interpretation of the above terms in the contemporary Russian literature and press.

In order to avoid the specifically Russian confusion of the formally legal aspect with the ethnologic proper (cultural and historical) and also phasic connotations such as the theories of economic structures, it seems preferable to use the term *ethnos* as a neutral, basic concept that can be used when comparing ethnic and linguistic situations. *Ethnos* corresponds to the linguistic term *idiom* used in sociolinguistics when it is necessary to avoid the language-dialect dichotomy. Classification at the "language-dialect" level inevitably involves a superimposition of the linguistics itself (possible mutual understanding, etc.) and sociopolitical aspects, which correlate to a certain extent with the problem of differentiation of the ethnographic and legal aspects in the system of terms "people, nation, nationality."

The eastern communities of the former USSR form in the main the so-called southern belt divided by the Caspian Sea into two main zones: Transcaucasia in the west and a vast geographical area in the east, which up to 1924–1925 was called Turkestan. Turkestan was part of the Russian Empire, and later part of the USSR, extending from the Caspian Sea in the west to the Chinese border in the east, and from the Aral-Irtysh watershed in the north to the border with Iran and Afghanistan in the south—the so-called Russian or Western Turkestan.⁴ After the division into national states in 1924–1925, the name Turkestan was changed to Central Asia. Thus, from a purely geographic point of view, Central Asia (formerly Turkestan) includes the territories of the present Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan, Tajikistan, Kyrgyzstan, and the southern part of Kazakhstan. A somewhat different division is used in economic geography: Kazakhstan is not included in the Central Asian region (hence the standard geographical definition "Central Asia and Kazakhstan"). Here, *Central Asia* is used in its original meaning but with Kazakhstan included.

Russian geographical tradition precisely delimits Central Asia from Middle Asia, another vast geographical region situated farther to the east and covering the territories of Mongolia and the greater part of China. In the European geographical tradition, the concepts of Central Asia and Middle Asia are not clearly differentiated. Moreover, at the meeting of the heads of state of the region held in Tashkent at the beginning of January 1993, it was decided to name the region encompassing Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, and Turkmenistan as Central Asia.

The ethnic and ethno-political situations are quite distinct between the Caucasian and Central Asian regions.

First, in the Caucasus, historically distinct correlations have formed be-

tween the state-political and ethnic aspects. In other words, the government always has had an ethno-national character.

Second, an important component of the ethno-political situation in the Caucasus is the coincidence of the ethnic and religious boundaries, especially in the case of the three main peoples of Transcaucasia: Azerbaijanians, Georgians, and Armenians. The religious distinctions have intensified with the interethnic differences. The result is that the religious factor has promoted the processes of intraethnic consolidation and interethnic divergence.

Third, the sociopsychological aspect of territorial relations is also ethnically coloured and has furthered intraethnic consolidation and interethnic divergence.

Prevalent in the Caucasian region as a whole is the deep-rooted conviction of ethnic demarcation of the lands and of the ancestral ethnic territories and the historically grounded right to possess certain lands. In the long and contradictory ethno-political history of the Caucasus, this belief inevitably led to clashes over the ethnic ownership of many territories. Therefore interethnic contradictions and conflicts in the Caucasus are largely of an ethno-territorial nature. Indeed, all of the recent interethnic conflicts in the Caucasus that have resulted in armed clashes are ethno-territorial and thus extremely difficult to settle.

The situation in Central Asia regarding these three points differs from that in the Caucasus.

First, the traditional political power in Central Asia had no pronounced ethnic marking and was ethnically rather neutral. In other words, the scramble for power by various tribal groups, clans, or dynasties was not viewed as an interethnic struggle for supremacy. Indeed, the history of Central Asia abounds in situations that require special research to identify the ethnic character of certain state and political systems.

Second, Central Asia is distinguished by a high degree of religious homogeneity. Practically the entire population is Sunni Muslim. The only significant exception is the Pamirs mountain area, where one of the varieties of Ismailism prevails. When Central Asia was included in the Russian Empire, other religions began to arise there, a process that gained strength during the Soviet period. The religious factor in Central Asia therefore helped to overcome ethnic differences and promoted the process of trans-ethnic integration.

Third, the territorial element of interethnic relations in Central Asia also differs essentially from the situation in the Caucasus. Central Asia historically developed as a combination of two main types of regional distribution of ethnos: settled and nomadic. The ethno-professional specializations developed on this basis resulted in a coexistence within single territorial units of various ethnos and ethnic groups filling different economic and ecological niches, and therefore they were noncompetitive.

This does not mean, of course, that there were no ethnic conflicts in Central Asia. Moreover, the latest period in the history of Central Asia—when it was part of the Russian Empire and later of the USSR—produced substantial changes in all of these three components as they had formed by the mid-nineteenth century, which resulted in a considerable growth of potential interethnic conflict in the region.

Nevertheless, ethno-territorial conflicts, common in the Caucasian region, are not common in Central Asia. Among the interethnic conflicts or conflicts with an important ethnic element are ethno-functional conflicts, a category that includes ethnic conflicts to gain spheres and zones of influence, control, and key positions in the political and administrative, socioeconomic, linguistic, and other fields.

This does not mean there are no territorial claims in Central Asia with an ethnic basis. On the contrary, there have been about thirty such claims, approximately the number of such claims in the Northern Caucasus and one-third more than in Transcaucasia.⁵ Nevertheless, there is a difference in the potential danger of territorial claims supported on the state level and with the massive backing of the ethnoses concerned, and claims expressed on a narrow local level or by individual public movements and groups, often small in number.

It is important to differentiate ethno-territorial and ethno-functional conflicts because the former cannot be settled through a “just” examination of the claims made by the sides, since the principle of inviolability of the existing borders usually clashes with the right to self-determination. In other words, the final settlement of an ethno-territorial conflict means total destruction, or at least deportation, of one of the contending sides. As to ethno-functional conflicts, settlement is quite attainable here on the basis of an agreed redistribution of functions in the debated area.

There are other differences between the ethnic situations in the Caucasus and in Central Asia as well, and they will be analyzed in detail in this chapter.

The ethnic problems of both regions have much in common. Their similarities are a logical outcome of both the Caucasus and Central Asia having been components of a single centralized state at the two different stages of its existence: the Russian Empire and then the USSR. (The respective periods in the history of the regions under consideration will be termed *Russian* and *Soviet*.)

Despite the great centralization in the Russian Empire, its policy in the newly acquired territories had essential regional and local differences. Using the traditional classification of the two main systems of colonial rule as direct (French) and indirect (British), the Russian system was closer to the British. Bear in mind here the differences due to the fact that the new territories of the Russian Empire formed with the metropolis a single territory, whereas the West European colonial powers were separated geo-

graphically from their possessions. The extent of integration of the new possessions in the Russian Empire was bound to be considerably higher and of a different nature than in the British Empire.

The beginning of the Soviet period signified the change to the direct system. The principle of creating ethnic politico-administrative units (Union and Autonomous Republics, National Regions, Territories, and Districts), adopted in the USSR, helped to continue and strengthen the trend toward ethno-political development in Transcaucasia. In Central Asia the same policy resulted in an abrupt destruction of the existing ethno-political situation and the emergence of radically new realities. It can be said that the Central Asian situation began to develop in the Transcaucasian way. It is not mere chance that all of the thirty ethno-territorial claims referred to are the result of the national-political borders established during the Soviet period in Central Asia.

CENTRAL ASIA: ETHNIC HISTORY

The ethnic history of Central Asia is distinguished by great complexity. Its characteristic features are considerable migrations of the population and a permanent inflow of large groups of people from outside. The result has been a constant change of the ethnic composition of the population, in Central Asia as a whole and in its separate parts, owing not only to the arrival and departure of certain peoples but also the processes of ethnic interaction, assimilation, and integration.

The general picture is complicated by the impact of epistemological factors. The classification of peoples—ethnic classification—actually represents a classification of their languages, although the classification of languages obviously does not coincide with the ethnic (and anthropological) classification. The inclusion of ethnoes into groups of different levels presupposes some degree of proximity or kinship unless a different explicit aim is in view, such as classification of ethnic entities on other bases that allow putting together clearly unrelated ethnoes (for instance, cattle-breeding nomads). As to classifications in ethnology (cultural anthropology), the exclusive use of language as the clue—which undoubtedly is important but not the only characteristic used in defining ethnic communities—is due to the fact that of all characteristics, only language yields itself to an accurate, formal, and, importantly, unambiguous classification. According to comparative historical philology, there are no “mixed” languages, that is, one language cannot be included in two different linguistic families or groups.⁶ This principle, however, is in no way applicable to the ethnic situation proper since the mixture of heterogeneous elements in a single ethnos is more a rule than an exception. It is quite natural, therefore, for the traditional nomenclatures of the peoples always to contain the taxonomic units, for which there is no

place in "strictly scientific" classifications since they are defined on the basis of nonlinguistic criteria, for example, the Central Asian Sarts and Kuramas.

Consistent application of the genetic classification principle results in paradoxical conclusions, for instance, the absence of a native population in present-day Central Asia, with the exception of the Pamiris and Yagnobis, which contradicts well-known facts.⁷

Within the limits of this work, the ethno-linguistic history of Central Asia is examined only to the extent to which it influences the existing situation and makes itself felt in interethnic tensions and conflicts. Therefore, the reliance on linguistic criteria in ethnic classification appears adequate.

The 1979 census figures are the starting point for the analysis.⁸ According to these figures, the ethnic composition of the Central Asian population is as shown in Table 1.1. These data compromise the main ethnic communities in Central Asia. They do not include the less significant ethnic groups in each republic (less than 0.5 percent), which do not influence the ethno-political situation.

The ethnosets represented in this list could be typologized according to various parameters. In the analysis here, use will be made of only such parameters as are relevant from the point of view of relations and possible conflicts on the interethnic and intraethnic levels (i.e., between individual groups and subdivisions within a single ethnos).

These ethnosets should be divided into two groups according to their belonging to the corresponding territory: native ethnosets and nonnative ethnosets. The first group encompasses the ethnosets for which Central Asia was the area of their formation. In the process of formation of the ethnosets in the first group, an important role was played by ethnic communities exogenic to Central Asia, evidenced, in part, by the genetic classification of the languages. Ethno-genetic factors, however, in no way influence the ethno-political processes today. Of importance here is the difference between the ethnosets of the first and the second group, the latter includes ethnic communities that are sometimes quite significant in absolute numbers and in their percentage of the population of individual Central Asian regions and have roots beyond the borders of Central Asia. As a rule, they are part of the corresponding main ethnic group residing outside Central Asia. In the Soviet political and administrative system, those in the first group received the status of the titular nation. None of the ethnosets in the second group was granted such status.

The ethnosets of the first group could be divided into two subgroups: (1) ethnosets whose greater part is to be found within the respective political units and in Central Asia as a whole and (2) those whose important part (over one-third) occurs outside these bounds.

Statistical data on the number of autochthonous ethnosets of Central Asia in the USSR and other countries based on the 1985 estimates are (in thousands):⁹

Table 1.1
Ethnic Composition of Central Asian Population, 1979

Kazakhstan		Total: 14 684 283	
Kazakhs	5 289 349	Poles	61 136
Russians	5 991 205	Greeks	49 930
Germans	900 207	Bashkirs	32 599
Ukrainians	897 964	Mordovians	31 424
Tatars	313 460	Moldavians	30 256
Uzbeks	263 295	Turks	25 820
Byelorussians	181 491	Jews	23 466
Uighurs	147 943	Dunghans	22 491
Koreans	91 984	Chuvashs	22 310
Azerbaijanians	73 345	Tajiks	19 293
Uzbekistan		Total: 15 389 307	
Uzbeks	10 569 007	Koreans	163 062
Karakalpaks	297 788	Kirgizes	142 182
Russians	1 665 658	Ukrainians	113 826
Tatars	648 764	Turkmens	92 285
Kazakhs	620 136	Jews	99 908
Tajiks	594 627	Azerbaijanians	59 779
		Turks	48 726
Tajikistan		Total: 3 806 220	
Tajiks	2 237 048	Germans	3 853
Uzbeks	873 199	Ukrainians	35 826
Russians	395 089	Jews	14 667
Tatars	79 529	Turkmen	13 991
Kirgizes	48 376	Koreans	11 179
		Kazakhs	9 606
Kyrgyzstan		Total: 3 522 832	
Kirgizes	1 687 382	Uighurs	29 817
Russians	911 703	Kazakhs	27 442
Uzbeks	426 194	Dunghans	26 661
Ukrainians	109 324	Tajiks	23 209
Germans	101 057	Azerbaijanians	17 207
Tatars	72 018	Koreans	14 408
Turkmenia		Total: 2 764 748	
Turkmen	1 891 695	Azerbaijanians	23 548
Russians	349 170	Baluchi	18 584
Uzbeks	233 730	Daghestan peoples	11 555
Kazakhs	79 539	Byelorussians	5 289
Tatars	40 432	Persians	4 827
Ukrainians	37 118	Germans	4 561
Armenians	26 605	Bashkirs	3 914
		Kurds	3 521

Uzbeks: USSR, 14,800; Afghanistan, 1,600; People's Republic of China, 13.

Kazakhs: USSR, 7,470; People's Republic of China, 960; Mongolia, 96.

Kirgizes: USSR, 2,240; People's Republic of China, 120; also small groups in Mongolia, Pakistan, and Afghanistan.

Turkmen: USSR, 2,400; Iran, 700; Afghanistan, 350; Iraq, 200; Turkey, 120; Syria, 35; Jordan, 3.0.

Karakalpaks: USSR, 350; Afghanistan, 5.0.

As to the Pamiris, in 1985 there were about 100,000 of them in Afghanistan's Badakhshan, in Pakistan, and in Xinjiang Uighur in China. There are no data for the USSR, because the Pamiris are counted with the Tajiks (according to the 1979 census, in the Gorno-Badakhshan Autonomous Region, the main area of residence of the Pamiris, there were about 116,000 Tajiks).

Hence, the Uzbeks, Kazakhs, Kirghizes, and Karakalpaks fall into the first subgroup, and the Tajiks, Turkmen, and Pamiris fall into the second subgroup.

In the Soviet period of the history of Central Asia, there was little difference between these two groups. After the disintegration of the USSR and the appearance of the five independent states in Central Asia, the situation changed radically. The very fact of the existence of divided ethnoses cannot but have an impact on the international situation in the region and on the internal balance of ethno-political forces in the new states.

Despite a certain outward similarity, the situations with different ethnoses differ essentially. The Turkmen case appears more stable than Tajik since the majority of Turkmen reside in Turkmenistan and the foreign Turkmen community is divided among several countries. In the Tajik case, the prevailing ethnic majority lives outside Tajikistan, specifically in Afghanistan. Moreover, account should be taken of the close Tajik-Persian affinity, which makes the internal situation in Tajikistan even more vulnerable, although it creates a certain balance between Iran and Afghanistan.

There is also a great difference in the group between the Uzbek and Kazakh situations despite the similar statistical ratio. The Uzbeks in Afghanistan seem to be a more powerful factor for Uzbekistan than the Kazakhs in China for Kazakhstan. In the former case, we have two states within the Islamic world, with the Uzbek vector of force superimposed on the relatively stronger Tajik. In the Kazakh case, the opposite is true: the new Turkic states are proving magnetic for the Turkic minorities in Xinjiang. Thus, the vector of interaction has an opposite direction.

As to the group of nonautochthonous ethnoses, they are enumerated in the statistical data already given on the ethnic composition of the population in the Central Asian states. These ethnoses do not constitute a single whole either. It is very important where the original ethnic areas of these groups

of the Central Asian population are: within the borders of the Russian Empire and the USSR or outside them. In other words, distinction should be made between internal and external migration flows.

EXTERNAL AND INTERNAL MIGRATIONS

External migration, into Central Asia from the south and the east, pertains to national minorities in the contiguous countries fleeing from persecution or seeking more favorable conditions. These groups include, in part, Dungs, Uigurs, Kurds, Baluchis, and Central Asian (Bukhara) Jews. They also formally include the Central Asian Arabs living in Central Asia since the eighth century A.D., that is, since the conquest of that region by the Arabian Caliphate, and Persians from Iran. Both groups have been practically fully assimilated.

As to internal migration, most important here is the migration of Slavonic peoples—Russians above all, as well as Ukrainians and, considerably less, Byelorussians. They began settling in the northern areas of Kazakhstan in the latter half of the eighteenth century. After the inclusion of Central Asia in the Russian Empire in the latter half of the nineteenth century, the Slavonic expansion spread southward.

The Russian period of the history of Central Asia saw two powerful waves of migration of landless and land-hungry peasants and Cossacks from the southern and central regions of the European part of the Russian Empire to the territory of present Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan: after 1861 and from 1906 to 1914. The first wave followed the abolition of serfdom in Russia and reached its peak in the 1880s. The second wave was caused by Stolypin's agrarian reforms and continued up to the start of World War I. The reforms, named after P. A. Stolypin, chairman of the Council of Ministers, purposed to do away with the peasant community and allotment landownership and to introduce private ownership for the peasants. This migration was officially supported by the authorities, ensuring the transfer of the pastures used by the nomadic Kazakh and Kirghiz tribes to Slavonic agrarian settlers. Thus there arose in Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan sections of Slavonic (Russian and Ukrainian) agrarian settlers, now representing five or more generations.

Still another powerful wave of Slavonic migration to Central Asia was directed to the cities and urbanized settlements and covered all of its territory. Originally most of the migrants were people connected with the military and administrative structures of the empire. But gradually working people connected with industry and trade came too, and by the Soviet period, they became prevalent. These migrants were skilled workers, scientific and technical personnel for industry, physicians, teachers, research workers, and others, and they settled in the capitals and large industrial centers.

The program of land development in Kazakhstan carried out in the 1950s

produced one more powerful and officially sponsored wave of rural migration from central and southern Russia and the Ukraine to Kazakhstan (mainly to its northern areas).

The intensive tide of Russian migration to Central Asia absorbed those from other nations as well, mostly from the Volga-Urals region, with Tatars and Mordovians (the Finno-Ugrian ethnic group) in the lead. The role of Tatar migration was especially great because this Turkic-speaking and Muslim ethnos is the most Europeanized among the Muslims of the former Russian Empire. This new ethnic component has not caused any perceptible consequences and tensions in ethno-political relations.

Another appreciable migration current had as its source the Caucasus, mainly Azerbaijan, Daghestan, and Armenia, with these migrants concentrating in the spheres of trade and services. The ethnic monopolies that resulted in these economically attractive spheres of activity have led recently to interethnic tensions and open conflicts between the "Caucasians" and the local population.

There is one more specific current of internal migration of various peoples of the former USSR to Central Asia. It involved forcible resettlements and deportations on ethnic grounds practiced at the time of Stalin's repressions. In this way but at different times during the 1930s and the 1940s, Central Asia became the place of residence for Germans from the Volga region, Koreans, Crimean Tatars, Turks (Turks-Meskhethians named after the place of their residence, Meskhethi, one of the historic regions of southern Georgia), and Pontic Greeks. These ethnic groups found themselves involved in interethnic conflicts, although the principal problem here arises from their desire to return to their home regions within the territory of the former USSR, or to Germany, Greece, or Turkey, respectively. Mention should be made also of the growing emigration of Central Asian Jews to Israel.

At the end of World War II, a number of peoples of the Northern Caucasus (Chechens, Ingushes, Balkars, Kalmyks, etc.) were subjected to mass deportation to Central Asia. In the period of Khrushchev's de-Stalinization, however (the second half of the 1950s), they were permitted to return to their homeland. The resulting acute interethnic conflicts are now taking place outside Central Asia (for instance, the Ossetian-Ingush conflict is a direct consequence of Stalin's deportations).

The facts of the ethno-demographic statistics show that stability or tension in the ethno-political situation in Central Asia depends on two factors:

1. Relations within the macroethnic space of autochthonous population in Central Asia.
2. Relations between the autochthonous and Russian population (and also Ukrainians).

This latter group is usually called the "Russian-speaking population." Although a distinct official definition does not exist, the name shows that

this category encompasses the social group that uses the Russian language rather than native languages. In other words, this informal definition reflects the opposition between the native populations and the migrants from the European part of Russia (and the USSR).

The first group comprises the Turkic- and Persian-speaking ethnic groups professing Islam and coming from the adjoining Asian countries. The second group apparently could be regarded as a quasi-ethnic macrocommunity brought together by its linguistic, cultural, and sociopsychological orientation to Russia, to East European (and not Central Asian) culture. The group can, in principle, be called Central Asian Europeans.

The largest group in the interethnic tensions remaining outside the "Central Asians—Europeans" dichotomy are people of Caucasian origin. The attitude of the local population to these ethnic groups essentially differs from the attitude to the arrivals from Middle and East Asia. Thus, in 1989–1990 there were massacres of Turks-Meskhetin in Fergana Valley in Uzbekistan, Armenians in Dushanbe, and North Caucasians in Western Kazakhstan. The clashes caused a mass emigration of the victimized ethnic groups. Their danger for Central Asia as a whole is that they generate additional tension in relations between the two main components of the macroethnic situation. These two components of the ethnic situation in Central Asia will be considered below.

THE IRANIAN AND THE TURKIC COMMUNITIES

The autochthonous population of Central Asia belongs to the Iranian and Turkic ethno-linguistic entities.

Iranians are the oldest inhabitants of Central Asia, appearing in the first half of the first millennium B.C. The earliest Iranian settlers belonged to the East Iranian subgroup, but after the Arabian and Persian conquests of the Arabian Caliphate epoch in Central Asia, the West Iranian Farsi (Parsi) language began to prevail.

Farsi became predominant in what are today the territories of Uzbekistan and Tajikistan. At approximately that time, the Persian-speaking population of Central Asia was given the ethnonym Tajiks, and the local dialects of Farsi were called Tajik dialects. Apparently this ethnonym drives from one of the Arabic tribal names initially covering the entire Arabian (or Arabic-speaking) population of Central Asia and later the Persian-language component of that population.

The East Iranian dialects and languages, superseded by Farsi, have remained only in the most remote regions of the Western Pamirs, in the territory of the present Gorno-Badakhshan Autonomous Republic (as part of Tajikistan): Yazgulami, Shugni, Ishkashimi, Roshani, and some others, constituting the Pamiri group of the East Iranian languages, and Yagnobi

(in the Yagnob valley of Zeravshan), descending from the Sogdian language (with only 2,500 people speaking that language today).

Beginning in the fifth or sixth century A.D. Turkic tribes began to appear in Central Asia. Most important for the development of the ethnic situation today was the period from the eleventh to the sixteenth centuries, a time of massive waves of Turkic invasions in Central Asia.

The ethno-linguistic classification of the Turkic peoples is quite complicated,¹⁰ primarily because of the fact that nomadic Turkic tribes spread over vast territories, where they contacted, mixed, and replaced one another. Indeed, there is a remarkable similarity among different languages and dialects despite the enormous geographical territory over which they are distributed. By the number of their native speakers, the number of dialects, and the area of distribution, the Turkic languages occupy an exceptional place on the linguistic map of the world among the nomadic peoples. Hence, it is extremely difficult to distinguish the features of similarity and dissimilarity of various languages and dialects due to historical and genetic reasons from purely areal, caused by interference between neighboring idioms.

An additional complication is that throughout centuries, there formed written literary languages with various dialectal bases. With the existence of standard literary forms of language, some dialects are included into a language not on the basis of linguistic criteria (lexical proximity, phonetic and grammatical isoglosses), but because of the state-political affiliation and sociocultural orientation of the speakers of the dialects. Consequently, alterations in political and sociocultural situations can entail a change in the classification status of a specific idiom while its linguistic identity remains.

The scope of this chapter does not permit examining these problems in greater detail. I shall confine discussion to references to genetic grouping of the Central Asian Turkic languages according to the A. N. Samoilovich classification, which is most commonly used in genealogical characterization of individual Turkic languages.¹¹

The Turkmen language belongs to the Oghuz (or southwestern) group, which includes the Turkish and Azerbaijani languages. In the Oghuz group are also the Seljuks, named after their leader, Seljuk (the tenth and the beginning of the eleventh centuries), who formed a powerful medieval state and established the Seljukid dynasty. Because of areal contacts, the Turkmen language acquired certain features of the Kipchak linguistic group. The Old Turkmen literary language—the Eastern Oghuz areal variety of Turki—was primarily a language of poetry.

The Turkmen language is divided into a number of dialects in accordance with tribal structure: Tekke, Yomud, Ersari, Salyr, Saryk, and others. Turkmen literary language used today is based on the Tekke dialect.

The Uzbek and Uighur languages constitute the Chagatai (or southeastern) group. In the long and complicated process of the formation of the Uzbek

ethnos, however, Oghuz and Kipchak components participated along with the Karluk-Uighur ones. Consequently, one can see here the contradiction between the historico-genetical criteria of classification, on the one hand, and the political and sociocultural criteria. Thus, the Kipchak dialects of the Uzbek language cannot be included in the Chagatai group.

The contemporary Uzbek literary language was formed on the basis of linguistic standards of Tashkent and Fergana, with some influence from the Chagatai literary tradition. Since the Chagatai language, which developed in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries in Timurid Maverannakhr, and the later regional variety of Turki contain definite "Uzbekisms" in morphology, many philologists interpret the Chagatai language as Old Uzbek.

The Uighur language, also belonging to the Chagatai group, is the language of the Uighurs who migrated from the mid-eighteenth to the early twentieth centuries from the Chinese provinces of Xinjiang to the Kazakh Semirechye (Seven Rivers Area) and Fergana Valley, mainly the territory of today's Kirgizia and Uzbekistan. According to the 1979 census, the total number of Uighur-speaking people in Central Asia is 181,300. In the People's Republic of China, the number of Uighur-speaking peoples is 6,280,000. The uniform terms *Uighurs* and *Uighur language* were adopted for Central Asian Uighurs only in 1921. Previously, members of this ethnic entity were named according to the respective toponyms, and their language was called, among other descriptions, "the Tatar language of western China" or "the Turkish dialect of western China." (It should be noted that the present Uighur language is not a descendant of the Old Uighur literary language of the first half of the second millennium A.D. belonging to the Uighur, or northeastern, group, together with the Yakut, Tuviniian, Khakass, and Tofalar languages.)

The Kazakh, Kirgiz, and Karakalpak languages are included in the Kipchak (or northwestern) group. The Kazakh language has few dialects. Literary traditions exist from the second half of the nineteenth century. The contemporary literary language is based on the northeastern dialect. The Kirgiz language is divided into the northern and southern dialectal zones, with the northern dialect forming the basis of the literary language. Writing tradition exists from 1924. The Karakalpak language, closely related to Kazakh, has isoglosses uniting it with the Oghuz languages. It also experienced the influence of the Bulgar language. As in the Kirghiz language, its own writing tradition exists from 1924. Earlier the Karakalpaks used the Old Uzbek language, one of the local varieties of Turki.

The Kipchak group also comprises the Tatar language. In Central Asia, particularly in Uzbekistan and Kazakhstan, prevail Tatars from the Volga-Urals region—speakers of the central and western (Mishar) dialects. The Kipchak linguistic entity is also represented in a number of Uzbek dialects.

THE NOMADIC AND THE SETTLED POPULATION

For proper understanding of the prevailing ethno-political situation in Central Asia, there is one more aspect of paramount importance: the ethnic aspect of territorial distribution of the population. Most essential here are the (1) settled versus nomadic types of territorial distribution of ethnoses and (2) the extent of development and the type of urbanization. The dichotomy in the first category is virtually nonexistent today. Rather, I refer to the situation as it existed before the beginning of the twentieth century, when the settled or the nomadic type had far-reaching consequences in the social, cultural, and religious areas of life. Since all Turkic tribes that migrated to Central Asia were nomadic, the differences in the "settled-nomadic" opposition reflected a comparative chronology of transition to a settled life.

The leaders of this transition were the tribes of which, subsequently, the Uzbek ethnos was formed. The process was taking place in the main settlements in Central Asia—Fergana, Khorezm, Bukhara, and Tashkent (Shash)—and embraced many heterogeneous groups of Turkic tribes. Here is the reason why the Uzbeks have the most complex composition ethnogenetically, including Karlyk, Oghuz, and Kipchak components. It is apparently not mere chance that the most settled among the Turkic peoples of Central Asia have as their ethnonym the one that goes back to the name of the eighth khan of the Golden Horde from the dynasty of Chingizides after Batu, the grandson of Chingiz. That khan, Giyas ad-din Muhammad Ozbeg (Uzbek), ruled from 1312 to 1341. The name of Uzbek was known earlier as well. For example, it was the name of the last ruler from the dynasty of Ildegizides, overthrown by Khorezm-shah Jalal ad-din in 1225.¹²

It was the Golden Horde's khan Uzbek who made Islam the official religion, and the Uzbeks are the most Islamized among the Turkic peoples of Central Asia, which in its turn is a consequence of their settled mode of life. Islam is known to spread more intensively among settled populations. Ethnoses retaining a nomadic mode of life and traditional tribal system find themselves Islamized much later, and Islam there is of a considerably more superficial nature. Differences in this respect between the Uzbeks and the Kirgizes, Kazaskhs, and Turkmen are significant.

The transition to a settled way of life also meant a change from a tribal system to joining in aggregations on a territorial basis. Here, too, the Uzbeks were in the lead. The transition, however, was not absolute and total. Part of the Uzbek ethnos retained the tribal system and nomadic or seminomadic mode of life up to the twentieth century. And the part of the settled Turkic-speaking population that completely dissociated from the traditional Turkic social systems were not part of the Uzbek ethnos. These two groups of settled peoples—the settled Uzbeks and the Tajiks who had mixed with

them—received their own ethnonym, Sarts, with no foundation in any ethno-linguistic classification. The ethnonym went out of use in the Soviet period, since Soviet theory alleged complete extinction of tribal systems in the epoch of socialist construction; consequently, to set apart the Sarts and the Uzbeks was impossible. (Although in recent decades the tribal systems have been weakening and eroding, they are still quite alive among all the Turkic ethnoses of Central Asia, excluding the Uzbeks.)

Another significant example of the process of change of ethnic affiliation owing to social transformations is the Kurama group. In the nineteenth century the Kuramas were a group of settled land tillers (numbering about 80,000), completely detribalized and apparently descending from the lower classes (the word itself is taken to mean “the rabble”).¹³ They were, moreover, considered as part of the Kazakhs. In the 1926 census, Kuramas are listed in a separate line, and subsequently are no longer mentioned separately but are included in the Uzbek nationality.¹⁴ The role of sociocultural and political factors in ethnic classification is clear from the history of the ethnonym “Kazakh, Cossack,” a Turkic word that means “free, independent.” It was applied to nomadic Turkic tribes that in the mid-fifteenth century left the Uzbek Khanate, which had recently arisen on the ruins of the Golden Horde, to preserve their independence. At first they were called “Uzbekkazakhs,” then simply “Kazakhs,” and later “Kirgiz-Kazakhs” or “Kirgiz-Kaisaks.” “Kirgizes” is one of the ancient, well-known Turkic ethnonyms, for instance, Kirgizes of the upper reaches of the Yenisei. Finally, in Russian tradition Kirgiz-Kazakhs became simply Kirgizes. In contrast, the present Kirgizes were called Kara-Kirgizes. The term “Russian Cossacks (Cossacks)” is of the same origin. These were the people who fled from serfdom and state services to the territories in the south and the east bordering on the Turkic areas, hence the Turkic term.

From the first half of the sixteenth century, the nomadic peoples of the steppes, who escaped from the power of the Uzbek Khanate and resided to the north and east of it, were called Kazakhs. That population was replenished by new groups. In this way the Uzbeks and Kazakhs, who found themselves wide open to expansion of their ranks from outside, as distinct from normal tribal systems closed to outsiders, became the most numerous ethnoses in Central Asia.

Thus, in Central Asia, differences between the settled and nomadic population, between the ethnic groups that have preserved their traditional tribal systems and the groups that developed neighboring and territorial systems, prove more important for interethnic opposition than their belonging to different groups of the Turkic family of languages or even than the difference between the Turkic and the Iranian languages.

The absence of distinctly expressed oppositions in Central Asia between ethnoses on the ethno-linguistic, historico-cultural, and religious planes also makes itself felt in the political history of Central Asia and the adjoining

areas in the south, characterized by an absence of rigid ethno-political correlations. Geopolitical landmarks for the states were not ethno-linguistic and ethno-cultural borderlines but the borderlines of oases, trade routes, sources of water supply for irrigation and cattle breeding, and others. A similar situation is reflected in the ethnic composition of many states of the Middle East and South Asia. In Afghanistan, for instance, Afghans (Push-tuns) constitute 52.3 percent, and Persians in Iran constitute 45.6 percent of the total population. In Pakistan Panjabis make up 64.6 percent of the population, but no one looks upon Pakistan as a Panjabi state. Panjabi does not even have the status of an official language. The unifying factor there is not ethnic but religious and cultural.

In other words, the "eastern way" of formation of the state system differs from the European one, which centers on ethnicity in the form of national state. These differences can be explained in two ways: (1) phasic, that is, the situation in the Middle East should be compared with medieval Europe and (2) evolutionary, that is, Europe and the Middle East belong to different types of ethno-political evolution but not to different phases of a single way of development. No matter which of these two points of view is more sound, it is clear that a sharp transition from the "Eastern" type to "European" cannot but cause ethnic tensions and conflicts.

Until the nineteenth century, the ethno-political situation in Central Asia was developing in the following way. From the early sixteenth century, Uzbek dynasties dating back to the older branch of the Chingizides (descendants of Djochi) dominated. And the decisive role in the defeat of the Timurides and the establishment of Uzbek rule was played by the Shaibanides, the descendants of Djochi's youngest son, Shyvana, while Khan Uzbek himself, whose name began to be used as the ethnonym, was a member of the family of his second son, Batu. By the time of the Uzbeks' arrival, the population of Khorezm had already been Turkicized. In the southeast of Central Asia, the local Iranian-speaking population was partly assimilated and partly driven to the inconvenient mountain regions, unsuited for nomadic cattle breeding.

Initially there arose two powerful states ruled by the Uzbek dynasties: the Khorezm and Bukhara Khanates. The Bukhara Khanate received that name after the transfer of the capital from Samarkand to Bukhara in the end of the sixteenth century. From the mid-eighteenth century (after the conquests of the Persian Nadir Shah) the new dynasty of Mangyt adopted the title of emirs, and their state began to be called the Bukhara Emirate.

As to the Khorezm Khanate, in the early seventeenth century, Khiva became its capital; it is therefore in the Russian and European historical tradition to use the name Khiva Khanate. The local official terminology, however, preserved the old name, hence, the name of the Khorezm People's Soviet Republic that came into being in 1920 in place of the Khiva Khanate.

In the eighteenth century, within the Bukhara Khanate was formed an

independent territory, Kokand Khanate. Consequently, by the nineteenth century, the main states in Central Asia were the three khanates: Khiva (Khorezm), Bukhara, and Kokand. There also existed smaller feudal possessions, independent or in vassalage to the main political centers of the region, as well as alliances and confederations of nomadic Turkic ethnoses, also either independent or under the power of one of the khanates. These nomads maintained tribal types of social organization, but specific structures differed greatly.

The Kazakhs were united in three tribal confederations or Juzes: senior, middle, and junior (Ulu, Orta, and Kishi). The inner structure of Juzes was different. The senior confederation fell into ten "clans"; the middle, into four tribes consisting of forty-three clans; and the junior into two large tribes, one of them subdivided into two parts and further into clans, the junior Juz including twenty-five clans.¹⁵ Each Juz was headed by an elected khan, and the khans had definite nomadic territories: the junior in the northwest, the middle in the central part of Kazakhstan, and the senior in the east.

The Turkmen divided into the following tribes: Teke, Ersari, Yomut, Saryk, Chovdur, Geklen, and Salyr. The tribes had a complex genealogical structure based on a dual principle. Despite the absence of a unified state or powerful tribal unions, the Turkmen are characterized by an internal ethnic unity. By the end of the nineteenth century, the larger tribes, which had assumed a settled mode of life, began to see their inner tribal system change into a territorial one, as, for instance, in the case of the Tekkes.¹⁶

The Kirgizes also had a clearly tribal structure with a division into two "wings," the right and the left. The right wing numbers twenty-one tribes and the left eight. There are, besides, a tribal group, Ichkilik, which numbers ten tribes, and a group of seven tribes of mixed or non-Kirgiz origin. The largest Kirgiz tribes—Sarybagyshese, Bugu, and Solto—are in the right wing.¹⁷

Tribal system is also specific for the Karakalpaks, divided into two major sections and subdivided into tribes and clans. The Karakalpaks adopted a settled and semisettled life in the Khorezm oasis at the end of the eighteenth and the early nineteenth centuries, so that structure began to lose its social importance although it has not disappeared, altogether.

At the end of the eighteenth and the early nineteenth centuries, the nomadic Uzbeks also had tribal systems similar to other Turkic ethnoses. But as a whole, by the nineteenth century the Uzbeks already had a long tradition of settled life and had in the main lost the tribal principle of social organization (although some of the larger tribes remained up to the twentieth century, for instance, the Mangytes, which produced the dynasty of Bukhara emirs of 1753–1920: the Kungrats—the head of the tribe Muhammad Amin founded a new Khiva dynasty in 1763—the Mingis, which tribe gave rise to the Kokand khans dynasty, and others). The massive process of transition to a settled way of life and loss of tribal structure characteristic of the Uzbek

ethnos involved other nomad Turkic ethnoses within the territory of the Uzbek khanates. Most profound was the impact of that process on the Kazakhs, but it also influenced other ethnoses. Transition to a settled mode of life was accompanied by assimilation, the inclusion of the tribal groups into the Uzbek ethnos—hence, the dialectal heterogeneity of the Uzbek language. At the same time, the nomad tribes, although they found themselves dependent on Uzbek khans, preserved their ethnic identity. This peculiarity of the Central Asian ethnic situation made it possible for an Uzbek politician who denounced international conflicts to say that such conflicts between the Uzbeks and the other Turkic peoples of Central Asia are impossible because Uzbeks are the very same Turks who became settled.

The presence of a large mass of people who had lost their tribal structures led to the origination of a special pseudo-ethnic entity, the Sarts. There is a certain analogy here with the situation in West Africa, when completely detribalized groups (for instance, descendants of the former slaves who returned from the New World after the abolition of slave trade and slavery), under the influence of the predominant tribal principles of social organization, acquired the nature of some pseudo-ethnic structures and subsequently formed new ethnic entities (Akus, Creoles). Similarly, ethnic groups and tribes in India newly included in the sociocultural area of Hinduism were interpreted as separate castes.

Important for the existing Central Asian ethnic situation is the difference between the ethnoses and ethnic groups that have long been settled people and those that were still nomadic in the early twentieth century.

The recent nomads typically retain tribal structures. The traditionally settled population have developed communities on the territorial principle—from *makhallia* and *avlods* to regional amalgamations (like Kulyabis, Khodjenis, Namanganis, Samarkandis), up to macroregional types. Since even the most recent nomads number several decades of settled life, the territorial principle of intraethnic divergence begins to show here as well—for example, the Issyk-Kul and Osh groupings in Kyrgyzstan. Oppositions of this type, as recent events show—the conflict in Tajikistan above all—prove potentially dangerous. And the ethnic component is present in them manifestly or in a concealed form. Intraethnic divisions into local subgroups or amalgamations of tribes are reflected in dialectal division. The interethnic factor can also be present here. Thus, the North-South opposition for the two Central Asian republics, the south of Kyrgyzstan and the north of Tajikistan, includes the densely populated areas of the Fergana Valley. Consequently, the Uzbek factor inevitably makes itself felt here, although it is absent or considerably less manifest in the other regions of the two republics. What is meant here is not the tensions between the Uzbeks and the Kirgizes or the Uzbeks and the Tajiks (which also do take place), but the contradictions between the “Uzbekicized” and “non-Uzbekicized” territorial groups within the Kirgiz and Tajik ethnoses, correspondingly. A similar situation is to be

observed in the confrontation between the Amu-Darya middle reaches and the Tashauz oases of Turkmenia and the zone of northern approaches to the Kopet-Dag Mountains.

HOW THE NEW BORDERS CAME INTO BEING

Penetration of Russia into Central Asia dates back to the eighteenth century, when the Kazakh Junior Juz joined the Russian Empire, but the most important events took place after the 1860s. In 1865–1866 the Kokand Khanate was conquered, and military operations were started against the Bukhara emirate. In 1868 the Bukhara emir and in 1873 the Khorezm khan recognized Russia's sovereignty. In 1876 the Kokand Khanate was abolished. Between 1880 and 1891, the Russian army won its military expeditions in the Akhal oasis. The most stubborn resistance the Turkmen offered was in the battle near Geok-Tepe. By 1885, Tedjen and Merv (now Mary) became part of the Russian Empire; finally, in 1885 there was concluded a treaty with Great Britain on the border between Russia and Afghanistan, the process having been completed with the inclusion in the Russian Empire of the Pamirs.

Administratively, the Khiva Khanate and the Bukhara emirate remained as vassals under Russian suzerainty, and the other areas became part of the Turkestan Territory. Back in 1867, to administer the new territories of the Kokand Khanate and the Bukhara emirate, there was established the Turkestan Governorship-General, which from 1886 received the official name of the Turkestan Territory.

After the establishment of Soviet power in Central Asia in 1918, the Turkestan Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republic was proclaimed in the Turkestan Territory. In 1920, Soviet power was established in Khiva and Bukhara. There were proclaimed the Khorezm and Bukhara People's Soviet Republics, and the Kirgiz Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republic was created as part of the Russian Federation in the territories of northern Kazakhstan formerly not included in the Turkestan Republic.

Subsequently, with the formation of the USSR in 1924–1925, there was official national demarcation of the territories of the Bukhara, Khorezm, and Turkestan Republics. As the result, in 1924 were created the Uzbek Soviet Socialist Republic and the Turkmen Soviet Socialist Republic, as well as the Tajik Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republic within Uzbekistan and the Kara-Kirgiz Autonomous Region within the Russian Federation, with the latter subsequently renamed the Kirgiz Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republic. In 1925, the Kara-Kalpak Autonomous Area was formed, and the regions of the Turkestan Autonomous Republic inhabited by Kazakhs (i.e., southern Kazakhstan) were included in the Kirgiz Autonomous Republic, later renamed the Kazakh Autonomous Republic. Later, the Tajik (in 1929),

Kazakh, and Kirgiz (1936) Autonomous Republics were transformed into union republics, and the Kara-Kalpak Autonomous Area was made into an Autonomous Republic as part of the Russian Federation (1932), from 1936 constituting part of Uzbekistan as an autonomous republic. The result was the administrative and political organization of Soviet Central Asia, which with the disintegration of the USSR has led to the appearance of the five independent states: Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, and Turkmenistan.

The official national delimitation as states became a turning point in the history of Central Asia. Up to that time, the emergence, development, and disintegration of Central Asian states were not connected with interethnic boundaries. Interethnic borders were, moreover, vague, as, for instance, between the Uzbeks and the Kazakhs or the fact that in the medieval sources, the nomad tribes that settled in Mangyshlak in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, the so-called people of Tokhtamysh, were called both Turkmen and Uzbeks.¹⁸

Finally, a peculiar symbiosis arose in the process of parallel formation of the Uzbek and the Tajik ethnoses within a common territory and a common sociocultural and religious pace, the ethnoses belonging to different linguistic families (Altai and the Indo-European).

As the result of national-state delimitation, Central Asia passed to the European way of development, into nation-states. The so-called titular nations received advantages over others within their national republics. And since the ethnic picture of Central Asia was so complicated that it was impossible to ensure at least approximately the principle of conformity of the new political borders to interethnic divisions, this led to the appearance of hotbeds of ethno-territorial conflicts. Some of them arose in the process of delimitation but generally were still to pop up. The complete disparity of the principle of political delimitation to national features and historical conditions of Central Asia was indicated by the eminent Orientalist V. V. Bartold in a memorandum on this subject in 1924 but made public only in 1992.¹⁹ Special emphasis in the memorandum is also laid on the artificiality of Uzbek-Tajik delimitation.

Seven decades after that event, a new situation developed in Central Asia fraught with complications in interethnic relations. This new ethno-political reality is evident throughout socioeconomic life; here, however, I confine discussion to two examples from the field of ethnic demography and culture.

The natural advantages possessed by the titular nations in their republics led to a considerable growth of their share in the total population of the respective republic, as the following data, based on the 1959 and 1989 censuses, show. (The years shown are the longest stable period in the history of Soviet Central Asia):

	1959	1989
Kazakhstan	30.0%	39.7%
Uzbekistan	62.2%	71.4%
Tajikistan	53.1%	62.3%
Kirgizstan	40.5%	52.4%
Turkmenistan	60.9%	72.0%

Apart from the general policy of protectionism toward the titular nations, an important place here undoubtedly belongs to the ethno-tribal and ethno-territorial groupings playing a paramount role in the sociopolitical life of all Central Asian republics and certainly providing obvious advantages to the members of the titular ethnoses.

The disparity between the new and the past ethno-political realities is easy to see in the widespread attempts to interpret the history of culture in Central Asia in accordance with the new ethno-political borders by their extrapolation to the past. This results in "academic wars" for national attribution of outstanding monuments of ancient culture and architecture, masterpieces of medieval literature and their authors, and so forth. Such attempts are hard to correlate with the fact that none of the contemporary literary languages of Central Asia is a continuation of the medieval written and literary languages, which had a pronounced transethnic or even non-ethnic character and were poles apart from the spoken ethnic dialects. Besides, the ethnic situation of the Middle Ages, including ethnonymics, cannot be superimposed on the contemporary.

THE ROLE OF URBANIZATION

Urbanization plays an important role in the contemporary ethnic situation as well. What matters here is not only absolute indexes of the process of urbanization in the respective states and regions but also qualitative characteristics. Of primary importance for Central Asia appears to be the difference between traditional and contemporary types of urbanization. Such a typology has already been offered for various regions of the Third World, for instance, the A and B types of Southall's urbanization scheme.²⁰ The difference in urbanization types influences the ethnic and linguistic situations and the ethno-social and ethno-psychological stereotypes.²¹ Detailed investigation of this problem is outside the scope of this section, but it should be pointed out here that the traditional type of urbanization provides ground for conflicts between different autochthonous Central Asian ethnoses, while the contemporary type of urbanization is more vulnerable regarding conflicts between the Central Asian and European ethnic entities.

Most dangerous in this respect are the cases when urbanized territories of

the traditional type are outside the historically formed ethno-territorial regions—for example, the Tashauz region of Turkmenia and the Osh region of Kyrgyzstan, where the cities with the traditional Uzbek type of urbanism in Khorezm and the Fergana Valley, respectively, turn out to be the zones where inter-ethnic problems are especially acute. Kirgizes cannot settle on or receive land in the Uzbek quarters of Osh because control over all aspects of life there is in the hands of the Uzbek Makhallia, a situation that has resulted in inter-ethnic clashes. Furthermore, in such cases there is an overlapping of various factors working to destabilize interethnic relations, including contradictions between separate ethnoses historically belonging to the settled and nomadic social types—for instance, between the Uzbeks and the Turkmen. Therefore, for ethnoses that do not have long traditions of urbanization, the transition to an urban way of life is easier in cities of the contemporary urbanization type than in those of traditional type but with a different ethnic environment, where, apart from purely interethnic tensions, there arises the problem of mutual adaptation of various ethno-social structures.

As to the contradictions between the Russian-speaking or European and the autochthonous populations in Central Asia, an important role here is played by socioeconomic and religious factors. There exists voluminous literature on this subject. In the fundamental work of Lewis, Rowland, and Clem, for instance, all of the “Eastern” peoples of the USSR are included in a “Turkic-Muslim” group in contrast to the remaining groups of population in the USSR.²² The 1970s saw the termination of the intensive inflow of migrants to Central Asia from the European regions of the USSR for socioeconomic reasons (collectivization, industrialization, development of virgin lands, etc.) and a gradual reversal of the process, which involves primarily not the agrarian resettlers of several generations living in Central Asia (in Kazakhstan and Kirgizstan) but recent labor migrants making up a considerable part of the entire “European” population of Central Asia. According to the 1989 census figures, over half of the Russians residing in Central Asia (including Kazakhstan) were not born there (from 51.7 to 56.7 percent), and only 30 percent of all the resettlers of the first generation have lived there more than ten years.²³ The result is that in the past two decades, their absolute number in Uzbekistan, Tajikistan, and Turkmenistan has been declining, and in Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan, there has been almost no increase, which points to the outflow of Russians.

A significant factor for the alienation of “Europeans” in Central Asia is the linguistic one. The Soviet period of the history of this region was characterized by the policy of expansion of the Russian language as the main language of interethnic communication and the unifying factor in the state-political life, since the Russian language was apparently to become the language of “the Soviet people as the new historical community of people in the USSR.” Consequently the “national-Russian” bilingualism developing in Central Asia was one-sided; it applied only to the indigenous population.

According to the 1989 census, the percentage of people who said they knew the Russian language among the titular ethnoses of Central Asia was as follows:

Kazakhs: 62.8

Kirgizes: 35.2

Tajiks: 27.7

Turkmen: 27.7

Uzbeks: 23.8

At the same time the percentage of the Russian-speaking population who knew the local languages in their respective republics was as follows:²⁴

Kazakhstan: 0.9 percent

Kirgizstan: 1.2 percent

Tajikistan: 3.4 percent

Turkmenistan: 2.3 percent

Uzbekistan: 4.3 percent

The Russification policy had a number of negative consequences, although it is hardly justifiable to paint it exclusively in dark colors.²⁵ Among these negative consequences mention could be made of distributed bilingualism spreading in Central Asia.²⁶

The changes in the Central Asian states' linguistic policy, with emphasis on the local languages, their rising status, and the ousting of the Russian language are serious destabilizing factors for the Russian-speaking population of Central Asia.

The considerable growth of the "Europeans' " emigration from Central Asia will have grave economic effects. But from the point of view of the outbreak and evolution of interethnic conflicts, the situation in Kazakhstan with its sharp contrast between the northern and central regions having predominantly Russian population, and the southern, where Kazakhs make up the majority, is potentially dangerous. In the other republics of Central Asia a greater menace comes from interethnic tensions within the autochthonous population.

THE CAUCASUS: THE LANGUAGES AND THE PEOPLES

Politically, the Caucasus incorporates three independent Transcaucasian states (former republics of the USSR)—Azerbaijan, Armenia, and Georgia—as well as a number of autonomous republics of the Northern Caucasus, members of the Russian Federation. Part of the territory of the Northern Caucasus is included directly in the administrative regions of Russia.

The situation within the bounds of the Russian Federation is not covered in this work. As to the Transcaucasia, two main zones of interethnic conflicts can now be distinguished here: (1) the conflict between Azerbaijan and Armenia over Nagorno-Karabakh and also interethnic tensions in Azerbaijan itself and (2) the interethnic tensions in Georgia.

Inasmuch as Azerbaijan alone can be categorized as one of the "Eastern societies" in the former USSR, attention here will center on the problem of Nagorno-Karabakh and the situation in Azerbaijan. But Transcaucasia constitutes a single geopolitical whole; therefore, it is necessary to look briefly at the situation in Georgia.

The main areas of interethnic conflicts in Georgia are Abkhazia in the northwest of the republic and Southern Ossetia in its north-central part. The essence of conflicts here is the same as in Nagorno-Karabakh: the Abkhazians' and Ossetians' striving for national emancipation.

The Abkhazians' language is one of the Abkhazian-Adyghei branch of the North Caucasian family of languages, which also includes the languages of the Abazinians, Adygheis, Kabardins, and Circassians. The last three peoples have a common autoethnonym, Adyghei. In the Russian Empire all were called Circassians. The other branch of the North Caucasian family, Nakhian-Daghestanian, consists of two groups: (1) Nakhian, including the languages of the Chechens and the Ingushes, and (2) Daghestanian, including the many languages of the Avars, Lakhs, Darghins, and others. Special mention should be made of the language of the Lezghins because they reside in both Daghestan and Azerbaijan where they make up one of the most important national minorities.

The Ossets belong to the Iranian branch of the Indo-European family and live on both sides of the Caucasian ridge.

Ethnically the Georgian language is one of the Kartveli family of languages, which also includes Svanian, Megrelian, and Chanian (the last two form the Zanian subgroup). The Georgians, however, regard the Svans, Megreles, and Chans not as related ethnoses but as subdivisions of the single Georgian people together with such territorial groups as Khekvsurs, Imere-tians, Meskhetians, and Kakhetians.

NAGORNO-KARABAKH

Nagorno-Karabakh is situated in the southeastern part of Azerbaijan. Its area is 4,400 square kilometers. According to the 1989 census, its population was 190,000, of whom 75 to 76 percent were Armenians, 23 percent Azerbaijanians, and about 1 percent Russians and members of other ethnic groups.

In the first millennium A.D. the territory of Nagorno-Karabakh was part of the Artsakh province of the state of Caucasian Albania. To this day, the toponym of Artsakh is used by the Armenians to denote Nagorno-Karabakh in order to avoid using the Turkic-Persian toponym.

In the mid-eleventh century Karabakh was conquered by the Turks-Seljuks and in the 1330s by the Mongols. Since that time, the greater part of the former Artsakh is called Karabakh. Later, Karabakh found itself under Persian rule, and in the seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries, it was the scene of constant warfare between Iran and Turkey. In the mid-eighteenth century, Panakh Ali-khan founded the Karabakh Khanate. In 1750, there was built a fortress, Panakhabad, which later became the capital of Karabakh under the name of Shusha (the name of the nearby village). Along with the Karabakh Khanate, there existed on the territory of Nagorno-Karabakh several small principalities, governed by the local Muslim sultans and Armenian princes (*meliks*) in vassalage to the shah of Iran. Such five melikates of Nagorno-Karabakh were the last remains of the Armenian statehood after the conquest of eastern Armenia by Iran and of western Armenia by the Ottoman Empire. The *melikates* remained up to the time of inclusion of Karabakh in the Russian Empire. The Armenian *meliks* saw in Russia their natural Christian defender from the Muslim menace.

As the outcome of the Russian-Iranian war of 1804–1813, the Gulistan Peace Treaty confirmed Russian sovereignty over Karabakh established in 1805. The Russian-Iranian war of 1826–1828 also resulted in the inclusion in the Russian Empire of eastern Armenia and northern Azerbaijan. The larger southern part of Azerbaijan remained under the rule of Iran.

In the seventeenth century, after a long period of Iranian-Turkish rivalry in Transcaucasia, western Armenia found itself under the dominion of the Ottoman Empire. Following the genocide of the Armenians in Turkey in 1915–1916, it practically ceased to exist as Armenian territory.

Under the rule of the Russian Empire, the Karabakh Khanate was done away with in 1822, and the territory of Nagorno-Karabakh was included in the Caspian Region of the Russian Empire. In the process of administrative reforms, Karabakh was successively included in the Shamakha-Baku and the Elizavetpol provinces (the ancient Azerbaijan city of Gyandja was called Elizavetpol from 1804 to 1916, in the Soviet period Kirovobad, and now again Gyandja). Thus, Nagorno-Karabakh was part of the administrative units making up the territory of Azerbaijan. At the same time, western Armenia initially constituted a separate Armenian province, which included the territories of the former Yerevan and Nakhichevan Khanates. In 1840 it was incorporated with Georgia into a Georgian-Imeretian province.

After the collapse of the Russian Empire and a short period of independence of Armenia and Azerbaijan, during which a massacre of Armenians took place in Shusha in 1918, Soviet power was established in Transcaucasia. By the resolution of the Caucasian Bureau of the All-Russian Communist Party (Bolsheviks) in 1921, Nagorno-Karabakh was left within Azerbaijan, and on July 7, 1923, the Nagorno-Karabakh Autonomous Region was created as part of Azerbaijan, with its capital in Stepanakert. (The former village of Khankendy was renamed in 1923 in honor of the Bolshevik

leader of Transcaucasia Stepan Shaumian. In the course of the Karabakh conflict, Azerbaijan restored the former name; therefore, today, use is made of both names.)

All three Transcaucasian states were joined between 1922 and 1936 to make the Transcaucasian Soviet Federative Socialist Republic, and from 1936 they became independent union republics. But none of these changes affected the status of Nagorno-Karabakh.

In 1930, the Lachin Kurdish Autonomous Area in Azerbaijan, which connected Karabakh with Armenia, was abolished. The corridor was thus closed, and Karabakh became an enclave within Azerbaijan.

One of the major aspects of the Karabakh problem that has led to the conflict is ethno-demographic. Originally Azerbaijan was one of the most multiethnic republics in the USSR. From 1959 to 1989 the non-Azerbaijanian population there diminished by one-third, with the number of ethnic minorities in Azerbaijan declining five to seven times more quickly than in the Central Asia republics. In the Nakhichevan Autonomous Republic within Azerbaijan, Armenians originally made up half of the population; by 1970, they had dwindled to a mere 3 percent. In Nagorno-Karabakh the proportion of Armenians fell from 95 percent to 75 percent (in 1970 it was 80.5 percent), while the proportion of Azerbaijanians grew from 5 to 23 percent.

A similar process was taking place in Armenia. After the Second World War, the proportion of Azerbaijanian population declined from 30 to 6 percent in 1989. The result of the conflict is that no Armenians have remained in Azerbaijan and no Azerbaijanians in Armenia.

Religious borders in Transcaucasia coincide with ethnic ones and intensify interethnic tensions. This is especially apparent in the Karabakh conflict. The Azerbaijanians are the followers of the Shiite branch of Islam, while the Armenians are one of the oldest Christian nations in the world. The Armenian Apostolic church, also called Gregorian after the first Armenian patriarch, Gregori Partev, belongs to the Monophysite branch of Christianity, which became the official religion in Armenia in 301.

Linguistic borders between the Armenians and the Azerbaijanians are also manifested very sharply. As was mentioned above, the Azerbaijanians speak a language belonging to the Oghuz group of the Turkic languages. The Armenian language belongs to the Indo-European family. The Armenians, as well as the Iranians, are part of the general Indo-European civilized space, in contrast to the Turkic world, despite all the negative historical aspects in the Armenian-Iranian relations and regardless of religious oppositions.

Analysis of the development of the Karabakh conflict is given in Chapter 3 of this book. Here it should be emphasized that the Karabakh conflict is one of the gravest ethno-territorial conflicts, because inter-ethnic contradictions here have gone too far. While in the Middle East conflict it is possible to at least say that both sides in the conflict belong to the Semitic group of the Semito-Hamitic family of languages, which in no way facilitates

the achievement of understanding between the two sides, the barrier here passes over all the possible parameters: ethno-linguistic, religious, socio-cultural, and historical. The Armenians regard the Azerbaijanians as part of the Turkic ethnos—as Turks-Azers—and consequently, the whole complex of Armenian-Turkish relations is transferred here.

THE ETHNIC SITUATION IN AZERBAIJAN

According to the 1979 census, the ethnic composition of the population in Azerbaijan is (in thousands): Azerbaijanians, 4,709; Armenians, 475; Russians, 475; Daghestan nationalities, 205 (including Lezghins, 158; Avars, 36; Zakhurs, 8.5); Jews, 35; Tatars, 31; Ukrainians, 26; Georgians, 11; Tats, 8.8; Udins, 5.8; others, 45; total 6,027.

The ethno-demographic statistics of Azerbaijan have undergone major changes in recent years, since all of the Armenian population of the republic has left it. Considerable emigration of Russians and other minorities has also taken place. On the other hand, the Azerbaijanians who resided in Armenia, and the Azerbaijan population of Nagorno-Karabakh, have departed to Azerbaijan.

Another difficulty is due to the fact that in the censuses held in Azerbaijan some minorities were registered as Azerbaijanians, including Talyshes, Tats, Muslim Georgians (but not Christian), and Kurds. Therefore the number of Talyshes could be estimated very roughly. About 200,000 Talysh-speaking people live in the south of Azerbaijan and the adjoining territory of Iran.

The Lezghins, and also the Zakhurs and Udins, belong to the Lezghin branch of the Nakh-Daghestanian languages, and the Avars to the Avaro-Ando-Cezian branch of the same group. The Nakh-Daghestanian languages together with the Abkhazo-Adigeian constitute the North Caucasian family of languages.

The Kurds, the Tats, and the Talyshes belong to the Iranian group of the Indo-European family. In accordance with confessional distinctions, the Tats are divided into three groups: Muslims (Shiites), Jews (the so-called mountain Jews), and Christians (Monophysites).

As to the Azerbaijanians proper, this ethnic entity was formed between the eleventh and thirteenth centuries as the result of the arrival of Oghuz Turkic tribes and their mixing with the population already living there. The Azerbaijan language belongs to the Ogthuz group of Turkic languages. The Azerbaijanians' ethnogenesis comprises as its elements the native population inhabiting the ancient states of the region—Atropatena and the Caucasian Albania—as well as the numerous Persian-speaking and Turkic-speaking tribes invading the region beginning in the first millennium B.C. The last massive intrusion was by the Seljuks, who created their powerful state in the eleventh century. The Seljuks are one of the branches of the Turkmen

tribes (the Turki-Oghuzes) so named after their chief, Seljuk (tenth–early eleventh centuries), the founder of the Seljukid dynasty. It was the last invasion that proved decisive in the formation of the Azerbaidjanian ethnos, and the dialects of the Turkmen (Oghuz) tribes that came at that time made up the basis of the Azerbaijan language.

The Azerbaijanian ethnos is characterized by a comparatively poor intraethnic consolidation, with clearly expressed tribal and ethno-territorial groups, among them Karapapakhi, Padars, Karadaghs, Shahsevens, Airums, Afshars, and Bayats. These subethnic groups were formed as the result of the mixing of various Turkic tribes with the heterogeneous native population. But there are among them also quasi-ethnic entities similar to the Central Asian Sarts and Kuramas. Thus, in the epoch of prosperity of the Sephevid state under Shah Abbas I (late sixteenth–early eighteenth centuries) there was a considerable increase in the number of Shahsevens (literally “shah-loving”), the groupings of Turkmen, swearing allegiance not to the chiefs of large tribes but personally to the shah. Later they formed a separate ethnic entity.

The low degree of intraethnic consolidation apparently found its reflection in the fact that in the Russian Empire, Azerbaijanians were called Tatars or Turks, for instance, “Azerbaijan Tatars” or “Turks-Azers.”

In the early nineteenth century, after the inclusion of northern Azerbaijan in the Russian Empire, which was finally legalized by the Gulistan (1813) and the Turkmanchai (1828) peace treaties with Persia, the ethnic processes in northern and southern (Iranian) Azerbaijan began to diverge. In the south, such large groups as the Afshars, Shahsevens, and Karapapakhi increasingly separated and formed independent ethnoses. At the same time, the processes of intraethnic consolidation were intensified in the north, especially during the Soviet period. The result was that two opposite tendencies formed in the Azerbaijan Republic. On the one hand, it was pan-Turkic sentiments and orientation to Turkey. This tendency was strikingly expressed by the decision adopted in Azerbaijan at the end of December 1992 to make Turkish the official language of the republic. On the other hand, the Azerbaijanians consider themselves the heirs and successors of historical and cultural traditions of the autochthonous population, beginning from the Atropatena epoch, and thereby dissociate themselves from the other Turks as a people with more ancient and deeper historical roots.

Regarding the contemporary interethnic conflicts and tensions, the difference between these two tendencies is not a matter of principle, since these conflicts involve non-Turkic peoples (the Armenians, Lezghins, Talyshes, Kurds, and others). Thus, the decision concerning the official language of Azerbaijan was disapproved by the national minorities of the republic, especially by the Lezghins, and can aggravate the situation.

The difference in the ethnic situations of Central Asia and the Caucasus undoubtedly influences the nature of interethnic tensions and conflicts in

these regions and, therefore, the possibilities for preventing and settling them. But at the same time, the factors unifying Azerbaijan and the republics of Central Asia—their sharing of the Islamic and Turkic area—inevitably entail mutual influence on the development of events, especially regarding aggravation of interethnic contradictions.

NOTES

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2. *Problems of Eastern Europe*, pp. 252–253.

3. *Ibid.*, p. 253, n. 1.

4. Along with it there is the Chinese or Eastern Turkestan in Xinjiang and the Afghani Turkestan in the north of Afghanistan. See, for instance, *Bolshaya sovetskaya entsiklopediya*, 3d ed. vol. 24, part I, p. 377.

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15. Polyakov, *Istoricheskaya etnografiya*, p. 94.

16. *Ibid.*, pp. 95–96.

17. *Ibid.*, p. 97.

18. *Ibid.*, p. 157.

19. V. V. Bartold o natsionalnom razmezhevanii v Srednei Azii (V. V. Bartold on national delimitation in Central Asia)—“Vostok—Oriens,” (Moscow, 1991), no. 5.

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II

Economic Crisis as a Factor of Building up Socio-Political and Ethnonational Tensions in the Countries of Central Asia and Transcaucasia

LEONID A. FRIDMAN

Potential conflicts, including the conflicts in the sphere of ethnonational relations, smoulder, flare up, become heated and then explode—or cease—under the influence of numerous factors. If the conflicts last for a rather long period of time, experience suggests the reasons for this are usually not connected with erroneous actions of governments, leaders of opposition parties, and other participants of the political process. Or rather, they are not connected only with them. As a rule, such protracted conflicts reflect inward long-term tendencies in various fields of socio-economic life. Under this condition the characteristic features and peculiarities of the national economic development—the dynamics of production and consumption, drastic changes of historically established forms, as well as living standards and mode of life of population—may not only create prerequisites or cause the outbreak of socio-political (including interethnic), conflicts, but also contribute to their weakening. On the other hand, the above circumstances may aggravate and even bring to the point of “explosion” “ordinary” socio-economic contradictions and tensions which always exist in any society. That is why, without attaching self-sufficing character to the analysis of the economic situation proper, we think it necessary to describe some features of development of national economy in the new independent states (NIS) under the condition of economic crisis which became acute in 1992, and its probable consequences in different spheres of socio-political life, including the ethnonational relations.

ECONOMIC CRISIS IN THE NIS: MAIN MACROECONOMIC AND MACROSOCIAL CHARACTERISTICS

The economic crisis in the entire territory of the former USSR had overwhelming character and extraordinary intensity in 1992, after the disintegration of the unitary state and the declaration of independence of the NIS, which was accompanied by the breakup of traditional economic contacts and by the transition to the reforms. However, it does not mean that the crisis started in 1992. Rather, many of its signs were manifested much earlier. And if one of its most important features is considered to be the drop in production, this process was observed in different republics during the 1980s, and by the end of the decade it had assumed a stable character.

The main reason for the socioeconomic crisis is well known: systemic failure. The national economy gradually "failed"; it did not work steadily, had more and more breakdowns, and was inefficient. Thus, many of the elements of the crisis in Central Asia and Transcaucasia emerged in the economic sector and became noticeable earlier than in other regions, for several reasons relating to the development of these republics: a relatively low level of production and consumption; a mainly raw materials-producing agrarian character of economics and related unequal situation within the framework of the all-union division of labor; strong dependence on deliveries of the most important structural elements of the reproduction process: and economic vulnerability to any unfavorable changes in the center. Eventually a recession reached out to cover wider and wider spheres of the economy. From the beginning of the *perestroika*, it was not possible to change the course of events and stop the development of negative tendencies in all parts of the reproduction mechanism. The data on national income (per capita) illustrate the problem (table 2.1).

The economic crisis in most of the NIS started as far back as 1987 or 1989 and is still continuing (with a year-long break in Armenia and Kazakhstan). In Uzbekistan and Kyrgyzstan, the crisis was shorter, although both countries experienced serious economic difficulties in 1986 and 1987. The crisis began in Central Asia and Transcaucasia, the weakest points in the Soviet socioeconomic system, one to three years earlier than in "Slavonic" or more developed Baltic republics.

If we group the NIS according to the fall in per capita national income (in percent to 1985) it would appear that in Armenia, national income in 1991 dropped by 20 to 21 percent, in Azerbaijan and Tajikistan 17 percent, in Kazakhstan 8 percent, and in Turkmenistan 3 percent, but in Uzbekistan and Kyrgyzstan, it was higher, by 1 percent and 8 percent, respectively (Table 2.2). By the end of 1991, the most critical economic situation was observed in Armenia and Azerbaijan, which were in a state of undeclared war, and in Tajikistan, where the sharp drop in production (and consump-

Table 2.1
National Income Per Capita (percent)

Country	Years					
	1986	1987	1988	1989	1990	1991
Azerbaijan	100.4	102.8	102.8	89.8	88.1	99.6
Armenia	100.8	95.7	97.4	108.6	90.6	88.6
Belarus	103.7	102.1	100.7	107.5	97.3	98.1
Kazakhstan	100.5	98.5	107.3	98.8	98.3	89.7
Kyrgyzstan	98.9	99.4	110.9	102.7	103.1	94.8
Russia	101.5	100.6	103.6	101.1	95.6	85.7
Tajikistan	100.1	95.6	110.5	90.8	97.7	91.6
Turkmenistan	101.8	101.3	108.1	90.7	99.2	95.3
Uzbekistan	97.2	97.8	107.1	100.9	102.2	97.6
Ukraine	101.2	103.3	101.6	104.7	96.2	88.8
Total for the CIS	101.3	100.7	103.4	101.5	96.0	87.8

tion) intensified public discontent and aggravated social and political conflicts. For comparison, in the countries of Eastern Europe after the downfall of the communist regimes in 1989 and the initiation of reforms, the drop in production and per capita national income (as compared to 1985) was, on the whole, not so great: in 1991 in Hungary it reached 97.6 percent and in Poland 86.8 percent (in Tajikistan, 83.7 percent); in 1990 in Bulgaria it reached 97.2 percent and in Rumania 91.5 percent.

The economic deterioration throughout the former USSR was associated with attempts to reform the socioeconomic system; any weakening of pressure from the center on the provinces, and particularly on the remote areas, resulted in a failure of the old system for regulating economic relations and processes because this system was not based on market relations. Republics that were less self-sufficient economically and more dependent on the exchange of commodities and consumer goods (especially foodstuffs) and had fewer of "their own people" in the new administration in Moscow found themselves in the most unfavorable position. The former economic relations and mutual exchanges of raw materials, semifinished items, industrial equipment, and consumer goods were based on prices defined by higher authorities, and in most cases they were unprofitable for both sides. However, after the transition to a market system was declared, slightly corrected price

Table 2.2
National Income Per Capita (1985 = 100)

Country	Years					
	1986	1987	1988	1989	1990	1991
Azerbaijan	100.4	103.2	106.1	95.3	83.9	83.1
Armenia	100.8	96.5	94.0	102.1	92.5	79.9
Belarus	103.7	105.9	106.6	114.6	111.5	108.1
Kazakhstan	100.5	99.0	106.2	104.9	103.2	92.2
Kyrgyzstan	98.9	98.3	109.0	112.0	115.4	108.0
Russia	101.5	102.1	105.8	107.0	102.2	90.8
Tajikistan	100.1	95.8	105.9	96.1	93.9	83.7
Turkmenistan	101.8	103.1	111.4	101.1	100.3	97.2
Uzbekistan	97.2	95.1	101.8	102.7	105.0	101.8
Ukraine	101.2	104.5	106.2	111.2	107.0	94.8
Total for the CIS	101.3	102.0	105.5	107.1	102.8	92.0

ratios still remained, while economic discipline, and discipline in general, became weaker.

Due to its raw materials-producing agrarian structure, the national economy of the NIS of Central Asia and Azerbaijan was more dependent on crop-growing and cattle-breeding than more industrially developed ones. Moreover, good or poor crop yields immediately affected living standards. The central government, trying to mitigate the consequences of a drought or other natural calamities in various regions of the large country through redistribution of state food resources and imports, could not do much to improve the situation. Unfavorable weather conditions and poor crop yields heavily affected the well-being and diet of peasants, market prices, and, hence, the living standards of urban dwellers, who purchased the bulk of foods, not only in state shops (where food supplies were irregular) but at municipal markets or in villages and *kishlaks* (Central Asian villages). Finally, various enterprises, including leather, footwear, and, particularly, food industries, also experienced difficulties procuring raw materials. On the whole, the situation in agriculture reflected the state of the economy in general.

If we analyze the data in tables 2.3 and 2.4 from this point of view, we find that per capita agricultural production in Azerbaijan dropped within six years (from 1985 to 1991), and in Tajikistan within four years (including

Table 2.3

Agricultural Production Increments Compared to Previous Years (Per Capita, Percent)

Country	Years					
	1986	1987	1988	1989	1990	1991
Azerbaijan	-3.52	-2.53	-4.67	-10.32	-0.32	-0.08
Armenia	5.98	-7.98	0.42	-18.33	-11.53	8.82
Kazakhstan	12.08	-3.86	3.06	-8.44	5.81	-8.56
Kyrgyzstan	5.88	-0.52	2.15	0.66	-0.49	-9.14
Tajikistan	0.55	-10.04	5.98	-13.54	-0.50	-13.30
Turkmenistan	-4.23	2.19	5.89	-2.20	4.40	-4.43
Uzbekistan	-4.39	-2.42	6.03	-6.58	4.12	-6.77
Belarus	5.98	-0.48	-7.75	8.22	-9.22	-3.01
Russia	6.14	-2.07	2.33	0.97	-4.02	-5.32
Ukraine	1.93	1.73	-2.03	4.65	-3.94	-12.18
CIS	4.51	-1.44	0.69	0.58	-3.25	-7.49

three years in succession at the end of this period). In Uzbekistan this index also dropped within four years; however, the production drop was twice alternated with a rise. In the other NIS, per capita production dropped within three years—not in succession and extremely unevenly.

If we consider this process from the point of view of the magnitude of the agricultural crisis, it would appear that in Azerbaijan, this crisis was constantly increasing, and during the past three years, the gross agricultural output in this country was 20 to 21 percent lower than in 1985. A similar situation was observed in agriculture in Armenia, where the total per capita production dropped over the most recent five years compared to 1985. In 1989 this index was 20 percent lower, in 1990 30 percent lower, and in 1991 24 percent lower than in 1985.

The situation was more complicated in rural areas of Tajikistan. After 1986, per capita production was lower than at the beginning of this period, and in the last three years, this index became 17 percent and 27 percent lower than in 1985. The situation in Uzbekistan was also unfavorable. During six years the level of per capita production in agriculture was lower than in 1985; however, the volume of production drop turned out to be not so great, ranging from 1.4 percent to 7 percent, and only in 1991 did the corresponding figure reach 10 percent. In spite of annual fluctuations, the state of agriculture in Turkmenistan, Kyrgyzstan, and Kazakhstan was much more stable. Only in 1986 and 1987 was per capita production in

Table 2.4

Agricultural Production Increments As Compared to 1985 (Per Capita, Percent)

Country	Years					
	1986	1987	1988	1989	1990	1991
Azerbaijan	-3.5	-5.8	-10.2	-19.6	-19.3	-19.0
Armenia *	-1.7	-6.6	-5.9	-19.7	-29.9	-24.0
Kazakhstan	11.2	6.8	10.1	1.8	7.8	-1.0
Kyrgyzstan	5.7	4.9	6.8	8.3	8.0	-2.0
Tajikistan	0.4	-9.8	-4.5	-16.7	-16.5	-27.0
Turkmenistan	-4.4	-2.3	3.4	1.5	5.8	2.0
Uzbekistan	-4.6	-7.0	-1.4	-7.1	-3.2	-10.0
Belarus	6.1	5.6	-2.7	5.4	-4.1	-7.0
Russia	6.1	4.0	6.5	7.4	3.2	-1.8
Ukraine	1.9	3.6	1.5	6.2	2.1	-9.9
CIS	4.5	3.0	3.8	4.4	0.9	-6.7

* Since different sources give different data on Armenian population, there also are other estimates of the increase of the agricultural production volume: 1986: -6.0%; 1987: -2.6%; 1988: -2.2%; 1989: -20.1%; 1990: -29.3%; 1991: -24.3%.

Turkmenistan lower than in 1985, and its volume was not so great—from 2.3 to 4.4 percent. In Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan only in 1991, during the overall economic crisis and the drought that affected vast territories, did agricultural per capita production drop to a level lower than that of 1985 but only by 1 to 2 percent.

The crisis in agriculture were observed not only in Central Asia and Transcaucasia but in Slavonic republics. In Russia, however, per capita production in agriculture as compared to the year 1985 decreased only in 1991, and the volume of this decrease was not so large—2 percent.

For a better understanding of the impact of the agricultural crisis on the well-being of the population of a particular country, one can use the data on the production and consumption of some most important foodstuffs in 1985 and 1991 (table 2.5).

At the beginning of the 1990s, the production and consumption of foodstuffs substantially decreased in Armenia, Azerbaijan, and Tajikistan. While in Transcaucasia this was due to the military confrontation of Armenia and Azerbaijan, the political struggle in Azerbaijan, and the blockade of Armenia, in Tajikistan the drop reflected the long-term crisis in agriculture,

Table 2.5

Per Capita Consumption and Production of Foodstuffs

A. Meat and Meat Products in Terms of Meat

Country		Total per capita, kg			Increments (+), reduction (-) in % to respective year		
		1985	1990	1991	90/85	91/85	91/90
Azerbaijan:	Consumption	35	32	26	- 8.6	-25.7	-18.8
	Production	25	25	23	0	- 8.0	- 8.0
Armenia	Consumption	49	44	40	-10.2	-18.4	- 9.1
	Production	32	26	26	-18.8	-18.8	0
Kazakhstan	Consumption	58	71	65	22.4	12.1	- 8.4
	Production	72	93	92	29.2	27.8	- 1.1
Kyrgyzstan	Consumption	40	54	48	35.0	20.0	-11.1
	Production	43	58	54	34.9	25.6	- 6.9
Tajikistan	Consumption	31	26	21	-16.1	-32.2	-19.2
	Production	23	20	16	-13.0	-30.4	-20.0
Turkmenistan	Consumption	41	43	38	4.9	- 7.3	-11.6
	Production	27	28	27	3.7	0	- 3.6
Uzbekistan	Consumption	31	32	30	3.2	- 3.2	- 6.2
	Production	22	24	23	9.1	4.5	- 4.2

B. Milk and Milk Products in Terms of Milk

Country		Total per capita, kg			Increments (+), reduction (-) in % to respective year		
		1985	1990	1991	90/85	91/85	91/90
Azerbaijan:	Consumption	293	292	217	- 0.3	-25.9	-25.6
	Production	144	136	132	- 5.6	- 8.3	- 2.9
Armenia	Consumption	433	446	392	3.0	- 9.5	-12.1
	Production	165	122	118	-26.1	-28.5	- 3.3
Kazakhstan	Consumption	260	307	280	18.1	7.7	- 8.8
	Production	301	337	328	11.9	9.0	- 2.7
Kyrgyzstan	Consumption	182	266	249	46.2	36.8	- 6.4
	Production	194	270	254	39.2	30.9	- 5.9
Tajikistan	Consumption	152	161	154	5.9	1.3	- 4.3
	Production	122	109	103	-10.6	-15.6	- 5.5
Turkmenistan	Consumption	168	212	160	26.2	- 4.8	-24.5
	Production	109	119	118	9.2	8.2	- 0.8
Uzbekistan	Consumption	180	210	192	16.7	6.7	- 8.6
	Production	136	148	156	8.8	14.7	5.4

Table 2.5—Continued

C. Chicken Eggs

Country		Total per capita, pcs.			Increments (+), reduction(-) in % to respective year		
		1985	1990	1991	90/85	91/85	91/90
Azerbaijan:	Consumption	155	143	116	- 7.7	-25.2	-18.9
	Production	143	138	134	- 3.5	- 6.3	- 2.9
Armenia	Consumption	148	163	143	10.1	- 3.4	-12.3
	Production	173	146	139	-15.6	-19.6	- 4.8
Kazakhstan	Consumption	217	222	198	2.3	- 8.8	-10.8
	Production	240	250	240	4.2	0	- 4.0
Kyrgyzstan	Consumption	124	154	146	24.2	17.7	- 5.2
	Production	134	162	149	20.9	11.2	- 8.0
Tajikistan	Consumption	114	111	90	- 2.6	-21.1	-18.9
	Production	104	112	92	- 7.7	-11.5	-17.9
Turkmenistan	Consumption	92	101	82	9.8	-10.9	-18.8
	Production	86	89	78	3.5	- 9.3	-12.4
Uzbekistan	Consumption	107	120	107	12.1	0	-10.8
	Production	108	120	114	11.1	5.6	- 5.0

D. Vegetables and Gourds

Country		Total per capita, kg			Increments (+), reduction(-) in % to respective year		
		1985	1990	1991	90/85	91/85	91/90
Azerbaijan:	Consumption	62	67	65	8.1	4.8	- 3.0
	Production	132	129	123	- 2.3	- 6.8	- 4.6
Armenia	Consumption	135	132	138	2.2	2.2	4.5
	Production	187	126	136	-32.6	-27.3	7.9
Kazakhstan	Consumption	90	75	66	-16.7	-26.7	-12.0
	Production	69	86	69	24.6	0	-19.8
Kyrgyzstan	Consumption	98	78	64	-20.4	-34.7	-17.9
	Production	112	127	99	13.4	-11.6	-22.0
Tajikistan	Consumption	91	95	88	4.4	- 3.3	- 7.4
	Production	105	127	133	21.0	26.7	4.7
Turkmenistan	Consumption	111	123	84	10.8	-24.3	-31.7
	Production	98	198	178	102.4	81.6	-10.1
Uzbekistan	Consumption	107	107	113	0	5.6	5.6
	Production	133	187	195	40.6	46.6	4.3

Table 2.5—Continued

E. Potatoes

Country		Total per capita, kg			Increments (+), reduction(-) in % to respective year		
		1985	1990	1991	90/85	91/85	91/90
Azerbaijan:	Consumption	28	27	22	-3.6	-21.4	-18.5
	Production	33	26	27	-21.2	-18.2	3.8
Armenia	Consumption	65	58	60	-10.8	-7.7	3.4
	Production	92	64	81	-30.4	-11.9	26.6
Kazakhstan	Consumption	89	85	73	-4.5	-18.0	-14.1
	Production	139	139	128	0	-7.9	-7.9
Kyrgyzstan	Consumption	65	69	62	6.2	-4.6	-10.1
	Production	77	83	68	7.8	-11.7	-18.1
Tajikistan	Consumption	35	35	29	0	-17.1	-17.1
	Production	41	39	34	-4.9	-17.1	-12.8
Turkmenistan	Consumption	31	26	20	-16.1	-35.5	-23.1
	Production	7	10	8	42.9	14.3	-20.0
Uzbekistan	Consumption	26	29	22	11.5	-15.4	-24.1
	Production	13	16	15	23.1	15.3	-6.2

F. Vegetable Oil

Country		Total per capita, kg			Increments (+), reduction(-) in % to respective year		
		1985	1990	1991	90/85	91/85	91/90
Azerbaijan:	Consumption	3.1	2.5	2.5	-19.3	-19.3	0
	Production	7.7	5.7	—	-25.7	—	—
Armenia	Consumption	2.4	3.1	2.5	29.4	4.2	-19.4
	Production	2.0	1.8	—	-10.4	—	—
Kazakhstan	Consumption	9.8	10.9	9.0	11.2	-8.2	-17.4
	Production	4.4	5.7	—	29.2	—	—
Kyrgyzstan	Consumption	9.1	10.6	6.7	16.5	-26.4	-36.8
	Production	2.8	3.2	—	15.1	—	—
Tajikistan	Consumption	11.4	12.1	11.1	6.1	-2.6	-8.3
	Production	16.4	15.2	—	-7.3	—	—
Turkmenistan:	Consumption	8.0	8.4	9.0	5.0	12.5	7.1
	Production	23.6	28.7	—	21.6	—	—
Uzbekistan	Consumption	11.2	12.6	13.6	12.5	21.4	7.9
	Production	21.8	25.3	—	16.1	—	—

Table 2.5—Continued

G. Fish and Fish Products

Country		Total per capita, kg			Increments (+), reduction(-) in % to respective year		
		1985	1990	1991	90/85	91/85	91/90
Azerbaijan:	Consumption	4.7	4.2	3.9	-10.6	-17.0	-7.1
	Production	8.0	7.5	—	-6.0	—	—
Armenia	Consumption	4.9	7.5	5.0	53.1	2.0	-33.3
	Production	2.1	2.5	—	19.0	—	—
Kazakhstan	Consumption	10.9	10.7	7.0	-1.8	-35.8	-34.6
	Production	4.3	5.0	—	16.6	—	—
Kyrgyzstan	Consumption	6.5	6.3	5.1	-3.1	-21.5	-19.0
	Production	0.1	0.2	—	100.0	—	—
Tajikistan	Consumption	3.3	3.3	2.1	0	-36.4	-36.4
	Production	0.4	0.6	—	50.0	—	—
Turkmenistan	Consumption	4.6	4.7	3.0	2.2	-34.8	-36.2
	Production	13.2	14.5	—	9.8	—	—
Uzbekistan	Consumption	5.0	4.9	3.1	-2.0	-38.0	-36.7
	Production	1.3	1.0	—	-20.6	—	—

H. Fruits and Berries
(Consumption - without Processing for Wine-Making)

Country		Total per capita, kg			Increments (+), reduction(-) in % to respective year		
		1985	1990	1991	90/85	91/85	91/90
Azerbaijan:	Consumption	39.0	33.0	37.0	-15.8	-5.1	12.1
	Production	232.0	212.0	—	-8.6	—	—
Armenia	Consumption	47.0	41.0	43.0	-12.8	-8.5	4.9
	Production	126.0	88.8	—	-29.5	—	—
Kazakhstan	Consumption	22.0	23.0	13.0	4.6	-40.9	-43.5
	Production	20.0	26.2	—	31.0	—	—
Kyrgyzstan	Consumption	25.0	16.0	12.0	-36.0	-52.0	-25.0
	Production	26.0	41.6	—	60.0	—	—
Tajikistan	Consumption	38.0	30.0	24.0	-21.1	-36.8	-20.0
	Production	91.0	75.8	—	-16.5	—	—
Turkmenistan	Consumption	18.0	19.0	21.0	5.6	16.7	10.56
	Production	47.0	58.2	—	23.8	—	—
Uzbekistan	Consumption	31.0	23.0	24.0	-25.8	-22.6	4.3
	Production	71.0	67.6	—	-4.8	—	—

Table 2.5—Continued

		I. Sugar					
Country		Total per capita, kg			Increments in % to respective year		
		1985	1990	1991	90/85	91/85	91/90
Azerbaijan:	Consumption	36.8	36.4	23.0	- 1.1	-37.5	-36.8
	Production	0	0	—	0	—	—
Armenia	Consumption	28.7	38.9	30.0	35.5	4.6	-22.9
	Production	6.9	6.5	—	- 5.8	—	—
Kazakhstan	Consumption	37.0	38.9	26.2	5.1	-29.2	-32.6
	Production	21.3	19.0	—	-10.8	—	—
Kyrgyzstan	Consumption	31.9	36.7	35.3	15.0	10.7	- 3.8
	Production	71.1	87.0	—	22.4	—	—
Tajikistan	Consumption	25.5	27.9	21.7	9.4	-14.9	-22.2
	Production	0	0	—	0	—	—
Turkmenistan	Consumption	27.5	31.5	25.0	14.5	- 9.1	-20.6
	Production	0	0	—	0	—	—
Uzbekistan	Consumption	21.8	24.9	21.8	14.2	0	-12.4
	Production	0	0	—	0	—	—

J. Gross Yield of Grains and Consumption of Grain Products
(bread and pastes in terms of flour, flour, cereals, beans)

		Total per capita, kg			Increments in % to respective year		
Country		1985	1990	1991	90/85	91/85	91/90
		1985	1990	1991	90/85	91/85	91/90
Azerbaijan:	Consumption	158	151	155	- 4.4	- 1.9	2.6
	Production	181	191	181	5.5	0	- 5.2
Armenia	Consumption	134	129	130	- 3.7	3.0	0.8
	Production	90	76	90	-15.6	0	18.4
Kazakhstan	Consumption	146	146	146	0	0	0
	Production	1433	1702	708	18.8	-50.6	-58.4
Kyrgyzstan	Consumption	144	139	136	- 3.5	- 5.6	- 2.2
	Production	353	312	306	-11.6	-13.3	- 1.9
Tajikistan	Consumption	178	167	151	- 6.2	-15.2	- 9.6
	Production	67	57	52	-14.9	-22.4	- 8.8
Turkmenistan	Consumption	168	165	151	- 1.8	-10.1	- 8.5
	Production	94	122	125	29.8	33.0	2.4
Uzbekistan	Consumption	177	170	165	- 3.9	- 6.8	- 2.9
	Production	84	93	90	10.7	7.1	- 3.2
Russia	Consumption	119	119	118	0	- 0.8	- 0.8
	Production	689	787	599	14.2	-13.1	-23.9
Belarus	Consumption	131	126	126	- 3.8	- 3.8	0
	Production	583	686	614	17.7	5.3	-10.5

Table 2.5—*Continued*

Grain Shortages for the Production of Grain Products			
Country	Volume of food grain required for grain product production in 1991, kg	Food grain purchased (stored) in 1991, kg	Size of shortage of stored food grain (1991), %
Azerbaijan	189	34	-82.0
Armenia	159	15	-90.6
Kazakhstan	182	152	-16.5
Kyrgyzstan	173	23	-86.7
Tajikistan	207	23	-88.9
Turkmenistan	204	22	-89.2
Uzbekistan	211	20	-90.5
Russia	149	101	-32.2
Belarus	158	74	-53.2

which was aggravated by growing political instability and the struggle for power among various territorial groups of the ruling elite.

The general economic deterioration in the USSR at the end of the 1980s and in the early 1990s, the strengthening of the sovereignty of the republics, and their striving for political independence were accompanied by the growth of centrifugal tendencies in the economy as well. Local party and government leaders trying to consolidate their power did not want to share their food resources with the center. They tried to stabilize their position through improving supplies in the regions under their command. Moreover, food imports were limited because of the rapidly deteriorating financial situation of the USSR, including hard currency reserves. All of these factors contributed to the further limitation of the center's ability to redistribute foodstuffs among the republics. As a consequence, in certain countries where the consumption of some livestock products depended on deliveries from other areas, the volume of consumption dropped more than the volume of production. For example, during 1985–1991 the production of meat in Azerbaijan fell by 8 percent while its consumption for the same period was reduced by 26 percent; the respective figures are, for milk, 8.3 percent and 25.9 percent and for eggs, by 6.3 percent and 25.2 percent. In Tajikistan egg production was reduced by 12 percent, while the consumption of eggs dropped by 21 percent.

In other countries production and consumption were reduced in about the same proportion. During 1985–1991 in Tajikistan, the production and

the consumption of meat were reduced by 31 to 32 percent, more than in any other country; in Armenia the production and the consumption of meat dropped by 18 or 19 percent.

Meanwhile, the process of redistribution of food went on, particularly in Central Asia, where local leaders remained loyal to Moscow and followed orders coming from the center, since the sales of fruits, vegetables, and vegetable oil (even at underestimated official purchase prices) contributed to the lean local budgets. As a result, sometimes substantial increases in the production of certain foodstuffs were accompanied by a much more modest rise in their consumption and in some cases even by their reduction. For example, during six years the production of vegetables in Turkmenistan increased by 81 percent while their consumption in that country was reduced by 24 percent; the production of milk increased by 8.2 percent, but its consumption decreased by 4.8 percent. The production of potatoes in Turkmenistan increased by 14 percent and in Uzbekistan by 15 percent, while their consumption decreased by 35.5 percent and 15 percent, respectively. The production of meat in Uzbekistan increased (by 4.5 percent) or remained at the same level (in Turkmenistan), while its consumption was reduced by 3 percent and 7 percent, respectively. However, since 1985 in Uzbekistan and Turkmenistan, after the "cotton psychosis" lasting many decades (when in defiance of all agronomic standards and common sense cotton forced out all other crops and even limited vegetable growing and horticulture, to say nothing about animal husbandry), the local administration cautiously started to extend the areas under grain crops, fruit trees, kitchen crops, and fodder crops. As a consequence, over six years in Uzbekistan, per capita production of vegetables increased by 47 percent, grain by 7 percent, gross milk yield by 15 percent, and production of eggs by 6 percent. In Turkmenistan the yield of grain for the same period increased by one-third and milk yields by 8 percent.

In spite of the great importance of food production, the well-being of peasants in Uzbekistan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, and, to a lesser extent, Azerbaijan depended primarily on the main crop, cotton. The noticeable tendency toward the reduction of cotton yields was revealed long ago in this branch of crop growing in all republics, except for Turkmenistan. In 1991 the cotton yield in Uzbekistan was 13.4 percent lower than in the period 1976–1980 when the highest level of cotton yield was reached. In Tajikistan the cotton yield was 10 percent lower and in Azerbaijan 24 percent lower than over 1981–1985, when the highest yield was obtained. In 1991 the cotton yield in Kazakhstan was 9 percent lower and in Kyrgyzstan even 70 percent lower than over 1976–1980, the period of maximum yields. Only in Turkmenistan did cotton yields gradually increase: in 1991 the yield was 25 percent higher than over 1981–1985 and 26 percent higher than over 1976–1980.

There was no monocrop in Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan as in other coun-

tries in Central Asia. However, agriculture in this area was affected by weather conditions, particularly drought. After 1985 more attention was paid to animal husbandry. As a consequence, the production of meat in both republics increased by 26 to 28 percent and that of milk by 9 percent and 31 percent, respectively. Poor yields on rain-fed lands caused a reduction of grain production. In 1991 grain yield in Kazakhstan was 58 percent lower than in 1990 and in Kyrgyzstan 13 percent lower than in 1985; and the yield of potatoes in 1991 dropped by 8 percent and 12 percent, respectively; the yield of vegetables in Kyrgyzstan decreased by 12 percent.

As for food consumption, from 1985 to 1991 the consumption of potatoes in all seven new independent states decreased, the consumption of fruits dropped in all the states except for Turkmenistan (in Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, and Uzbekistan from 23 to 52 percent); the consumption of vegetables decreased in Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, and Turkmenistan; the consumption of fish decreased in all the states except for Armenia (and even there fish consumption in 1991 dropped by a third as compared to 1990); egg consumption decreased in the states except for Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan; milk consumption decreased in Azerbaijan, Armenia, and Turkmenistan; and finally, the consumption of meat decreased in Azerbaijan, Armenia, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan. Moreover, even when the corresponding index in 1991 was higher than in 1985, this index was lower everywhere than in 1990. In 1991 the crisis acquired a general character; in addition to the unfavorable weather conditions, some adverse effects were caused by the process of disintegration of economic relations, reduction of supplies of agricultural machines, spare parts for them, fertilizers, insecticides, fuel, and lubricants, construction materials, and forage.

The food production and consumption reductions seriously affected the populations of these countries. Reactions ranged from indifference and loss of confidence in the future to radicalism. Sentiments were so volatile that any disagreement could become violent.

The administration grasped the importance of the supply of foodstuffs, but during the period of the USSR disintegration (first *de facto* and then *de jure*), the state's ability to act suddenly became restricted. Every NIS government faced this problem. However, it was a general reduction of production, destruction of the monetary system, and intensified inflation that resulted in the decline of state purchases in 1991 (table 2.6). If we take into consideration the fact that foreign currency resources for importing food were drastically cut, it becomes evident that such a situation should have affected food supplies in winter and spring 1992. The result of that situation was taking some extraordinary measures designed to stabilize the food market partially. One such measure was the "liberalization of prices" of staple consumer goods.

Between 1985 and 1991, industrial production in the NIS was extremely

Table 2.6

Purchases of Agricultural Products in the CIS Countries (All Categories of Farms)

	Azerbaijan		Armenia		Kazakhstan		Kyrgyzstan		Tajikistan		Turkmeni- stan		Uzbekistan		Russia	
	1990	1991	1990	1991	1990	1991	1990	1991	1990	1991	1990	1991	1990	1991	1990	1991
<u>Crop Products, thou t</u>																
Grain	331	301	48	59	14819	3187	149	165	51	28	97	93	761	573	33977	22537
Raw cotton	543	540	-	-	324	290	81	62	842	819	1457	1431	5058	4646	-	-
Cotton fiber	180	177	-	-	102	92	25	19	256	247	437	417	1593	1440	-	-
Sugar beet	-	-	-	-	1034	617	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	25128	18631
Sunflower	-	-	-	-	110	51	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2339	1746
Potatoes	50	28	78	14	553	348	126	71	106	47	21	7	224	147	5485	4685
Vegetables	554	469	173	92	681	414	352	271	332	263	306	222	2164	2127	6786	4395
<u>Animal Products, thou t</u>																
Cattle and poultry (live weight)	167	102	96	63	1667	1504	240	182	124	70	126	79	568	308	11421	8998
Milk	373	349	232	133	3253	2922	535	463	285	248	207	205	980	957	39835	34169
Eggs, mln.pcs	369	353	330	302	2437	2325	431	363	511	354	214	179	1484	1316	32845	30533
Wool	7.2	5.6	1.2	1.1	60.2	58.8	20.7	18.9	3.6	3.4	10.0	9.9	19.6	18.3	111.0	98.8

Table 2.7

Industrial Production Volume Increments to the Previous Year (Per Capita, percent)

Country	Years					
	1986	1987	1988	1989	1990	1991
Azerbaijan	-3.52	2.10	1.83	-0.87	-7.52	-4.71
Armenia	7.22	3.48	-2.06	-7.88	-7.64	-9.97
Kazakhstan	4.62	2.95	2.37	1.24	-1.72	-1.50
Kyrgyzstan	2.34	-0.61	4.80	3.31	-2.35	-1.54
Tajikistan	-1.39	-1.56	2.20	-1.33	-1.48	-5.58
Turkmenistan	2.20	0.34	1.70	0.73	0.69	2.20
Uzbekistan	3.03	-0.28	0.67	1.13	-0.29	-0.39
Belarus	5.78	6.08	5.79	3.94	1.51	-1.01
Russia	3.95	2.59	2.93	0.67	-0.53	-8.31
Ukraine	3.93	3.42	3.65	2.36	-0.35	-4.99
CIS	3.72	2.71	2.87	0.98	-1.76	-8.28

uneven in most of the republics (table 2.7). For example, the reduction of the total volume of industrial per capita production in comparison with the previous year was observed during five years out of six (covering two "first" years and three "last" years) in Tajikistan; in Azerbaijan and Armenia during four years out of six (in Armenia, four years in succession); in Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan during three years out of six including two last years); and in Kazakhstan during the two last years. In Turkmenistan the reduction of production was not recorded. The magnitude of that reduction was not as large as in agriculture. As table 2.8 shows, only in Azerbaijan, Armenia, and Tajikistan did the value of the index drop thereafter below the 1985 level. In Azerbaijan it occurred during the entire period under study, except for 1988; in Armenia in 1990 and 1991 and possibly in 1989 as well (there is much doubt about population data in Armenia in 1985; therefore, two assessments of the corresponding indexes have been made); and, in Tajikistan, in 1986 as well as in 1990 and 1991. The maximum drop of production with respect to 1985 in Azerbaijan was 8 percent (in 1990); in Armenia, from 16.5 to 19 percent (in 1991); and in Tajikistan about 6 percent (in 1991). However, the reduction of the volume of production was observed mainly in heavy industry—producing capital goods, such as oil and gas. According to the data, the situation was much better with output of consumer goods.

As for the production of consumer goods, mainly foodstuffs, the worst

Table 2.8

Industrial Production Volume Increments to 1985 (Per Capita, percent)

Country	Years					
	1986	1987	1988	1989	1990	1991
Azerbaijan	-3.52	-1.12	0.24	-0.39	-8.08	-3.62
Armenia	7.22	10.53	8.46	0.07	-7.33	-16.48
Kazakhstan	4.62	8.08	10.58	12.09	10.10	8.49
Kyrgyzstan	2.34	1.95	6.64	10.29	7.43	6.10
Tajikistan	-1.39	0.35	2.66	1.23	-0.56	-5.96
Turkmenistan	2.20	2.50	4.57	4.68	5.65	8.19
Uzbekistan	3.03	2.51	3.61	4.75	4.37	4.16
Belarus	5.78	12.36	18.68	23.79	25.01	24.03
Russia	3.95	6.48	9.50	10.66	10.18	1.14
Ukraine	3.93	7.22	11.70	14.17	13.88	7.77
CIS	3.72	6.07	9.88	10.81	9.11	-0.02

situation was observed in Armenia and Tajikistan at the beginning of the 1990s. Because the initial level of product output in Armenia was much higher (production of nonfood goods, 3 times higher; light industry products, 2.1 times higher; and production of all consumer goods, 2.7 times higher), the severe drop in industrial production (and, hence, consumption of consumer goods) in Tajikistan aggravated the social atmosphere and undermined stability.

Thus, in 1991, industry in all the NIS was characterized by recession. Nevertheless, it would be wrong to overestimate its scope. In all countries of the NIS, except for Azerbaijan, Tajikistan, and Armenia, output exceeded the 1985 level, and out of the three countries that had the bleakest situation, only in Armenia was output lower by 16 to 19 percent. The drop in production was caused not only by the structural crisis but also by some extraordinary circumstances. In the countries of Eastern Europe, where the transition to a market economy was characterized by so-called shock therapy, the drop in industrial per capita production was significant in 1991: in Czechoslovakia the corresponding index was lower than in 1985 by 17.5 percent, in Poland by 24.5 percent, in Hungary by 25.3 percent, in Rumania by 30.7 percent, and in Bulgaria by 22.3 percent. Subsequent events revealed that something like that but different in nature would occur in the NIS in 1992. At that time the "liberalization of prices" began, coinciding with a disintegration of economic relations among the republics of the former USSR as well as among the republics and countries of Eastern and Central Europe.

The turnover of commodities forms a peculiar circulatory system of the national economy. Its dynamics (positive and negative) reveal whether the economy is following a normal course or whether crisis threatens the well-being of the population. Particular importance is attached to information on retail turnover and changes in volume (table 2.9). For example, the volume of sales of meat, sausage, ham, and the like decreased for two years in Azerbaijan by 21 percent; in Armenia, Kyrgyzstan, and Tajikistan by 33 percent; and in Uzbekistan by 37 percent. Sales of fish and fish products in Tajikistan declined by 20 percent; sales of butter fell in Azerbaijan and Tajikistan by 40 percent, in Armenia by 64 percent, in Kyrgyzstan by 44 percent, and in Uzbekistan by 35 percent. Sales of milk and dairy products fell in Kyrgyzstan by 24 percent. Sales of confectionery plummeted in Uzbekistan by 41 percent, in Turkmenistan by 23 percent, in Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan by 29 percent, in Kazakhstan by 37 percent, in Azerbaijan by 34 percent, and in Armenia by 47 percent. Sharp reductions in the volume of sales of vegetables and fruits were recorded in 1990–1991 in practically all republics of the former USSR. In 1990–1991 even in Armenia, Azerbaijan, Uzbekistan, Kyrgyzstan, Kazakhstan, and partially (fruits) in Tajikistan, which were famous for their orchards and market gardens, the sales of this vitamin-rich produce decreased by 15 to 35 percent.

Such a drastic deterioration in the quality and quantity of food particularly affected town dwellers who had no additional sources of food supply in the form of an orchard, a vegetable garden, regular food deliveries from relatives living in villages. In other words, these changes affected population groups who had become town dwellers in the full sense of the word, losing contacts with the rural environment and becoming Europeanized in life-style. They felt this deterioration keenly. Most town dwellers were forced, at least partially, to compensate for the reduced consumption of meat, fish, and butter by increased purchases of bread, noodles, and cereals, whose volume in 1991 in Armenia, Kyrgyzstan, and Turkmenistan grew by 7 to 15 percent. This situation intensified the tension of bread balance, which in many republics was based on grain deliveries.

While examining the low level of consumption of some valuable food products in the countries of Central Asia, it is necessary to look at per capita consumption in some countries of the NIS and the Middle East. For example, per capita meat consumption in Egypt is 14 kg, in Syria 16 kg, in Jordan and Turkey 17 kg, and in Iran 18 kg; sugar consumption is 28 kg, 25 kg, 30 kg, 24 kg, and 18 kg, respectively; potato consumption is 16 kg, 21 kg, 19 kg, 7 kg, and 26 kg, respectively (FAO Production Year Book, 1988). The point is that people who have gotten used to adequate supplies of good-quality food feel a reduction sorely. This was the case for the population in Tajikistan in the late 1980s and early 1990s. They compared their situation not with that in Egypt or Iran but with their own in the recent past. That was the starting point for them.

Table 2.9
Indexes of Physical Volumes of the Sale of Foodstuffs (Including Public Catering, in Comparable Price, Percent)

	Azerbaijan		Armenia		Kazakhstan		Kyrgyzstan		Tajikistan		Turkmenistan		Uzbekistan		Russia	
	1990	1991	1990	1991	1990	1991	1990	1991	1990	1991	1990	1991	1990	1991	1990	1991
	to	to	to	to	to	to	to	to	to	to	to	to	to	to	to	to
	1989	1990	1989	1990	1989	1990	1989	1990	1989	1990	1989	1990	1989	1990	1989	1990
All products	107.0	79.2	107.0	75.1	108.6	84.4	108.5	83.1	109.6	78.8	109.2	84.6	109.0	79.3	109.8	92.8
Foodstuffs	98.9	88.0	100.3	81.2	104.1	98.0	101.9	92.2	101.4	87.9	103.3	96.7	107.3	85.2	105.0	98.2
Meat and meat products	90.2	88.0	82.6	81.3	108.5	100.7	91.8	73.3	99.6	63.4	99.6	95.7	101.5	62.4	102.5	94.3
Fish and fish products	109.2	93.3	108.8	76.7	104.6	83.3	109.3	51.2	89.7	89.9	103.3	91.8	106.9	69.6	106.9	79.3
Animal butter	96.9	62.6	95.7	37.4	96.5	94.5	77.9	71.5	107.0	55.6	108.9	73.3	101.8	63.9	98.4	90.7
Vegetable oil	111.0	95.3	112.7	80.8	116.1	95.3	113.8	66.3	103.8	91.3	101.0	116.0	113.9	95.7	114.1	87.5
Milk and milk products (including cheese)	94.6	88.4	92.5	82.0	100.3	92.8	96.1	79.2	99.8	95.8	103.5	108.5	129.6	89.7	101.8	94.8
Eggs	88.3	84.1	94.6	90.4	108.1	96.2	106.1	79.4	109.5	67.0	98.4	77.5	96.6	75.0	105.3	98.5
Sugar	89.7	56.3	105.0	53.4	105.4	75.6	106.8	98.1	103.7	80.2	120.8	78.2	109.1	65.4	100.8	88.1
Confectionery	97.4	68.0	103.6	49.6	96.9	65.3	97.6	72.6	95.4	74.7	93.8	82.9	98.9	59.8	102.3	84.0
Flour, bread and bread products	95.8	102.0	105.5	116.1	104.5	96.1	95.9	112.8	101.8	102.3	100.1	107.6	102.5	103.7	104.8	106.4
Potatoes	130.7	158.4	89.2	25.2	90.0	82.3	105.2	102.8	99.2	51.5	90.8	94.0	124.1	81.3	92.1	84.6
Vegetables	74.0	86.4	75.9	49.5	83.5	81.3	85.7	82.6	75.1	103.1	86.9	86.5	90.6	95.3	95.8	86.0
Fruits and citruses	81.6	85.0	82.1	28.4	110.5	77.6	74.3	82.3	85.9	71.3	120.6	61.3	97.1	90.3	96.5	72.2

Things were quite different for nonfood goods. In 1990 there was a heavy demand for all goods that could be purchased at shops. People were afraid of monetary reform, inflation, and an increased deficit; they had lost their confidence in the safety of personal savings and their future. As a consequence, in one year the sales of fabric, clothes, linen, knitted fabric, footwear, and radio goods increased by 15 to 25 percent, up to 50 percent (radio goods). By 1991, for various reasons, most of these products had disappeared from shop shelves. People had money but could not spend it. In that year the volume of purchases of the main groups of goods, especially fabric, decreased two to three times in Armenia, Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Turkmenistan, and Tajikistan (cotton and silk fabric).

The people grew discontent. Although they produced cotton, leather, and wool, they could not buy fabric, linen, knitwear, or footwear (to say nothing of household appliances), which had been supplied by more industrially developed republics. Of course, most of these people had bought enough to last for several months or even a few years, so the true consequences of the recession, or, more precisely, the crisis of production, that affected the consumers' market was not revealed until 1992 and 1993. Nevertheless, it was clear that the whole system of production, wages, and prices needed radical reformation.

At first, local authorities steered away from true reform and tried, as before, to substitute the sale of deficit goods, whose scope rapidly extended. But as administrative structures continued to weaken, they could not stave off corruption and a swelling of the black market. The result was the growth of social tension in urban and rural areas and an aggravation of social contradictions, including interethnic ones. And in areas where the reduction of goods was particularly sharp, all conflicts inevitably became aggravated. It was not by chance that Tajikistan took the leading role; there, goods turnover dropped by 22 percent during one year. Armenia was an exception since it was blockaded; here retail turnover dropped by 26 percent in 1991 as compared to the previous year. By comparison, in Uzbekistan goods turnover dropped only by 8 percent; in Turkmenistan, Kazakhstan, and Azerbaijan by 12 percent and in Kyrgyzstan by 16 percent. Thus, in 1991 the worst trade situation was in Armenia, Tajikistan, and Kyrgyzstan. It should be noted that 68 percent of Armenia's total population lived in urban areas while in Tajikistan only 31 percent of the total population lived in towns and cities. Hence, in Armenia, the sharp reduction in retail turnover affected mainly urban dwellers, and in Tajikistan (to a lesser extent, in Kyrgyzstan) the reduction of turnover affected a great number of rural dwellers as well. If in Armenia less than 2 percent of the sown area was under industrial crops, in Tajikistan this index was 39 percent; the area under vineyards and orchards in Tajikistan and Armenia (in percentage to the total sown area) was practically the same. Thus, in Armenia, the area allocated for the production of food was much larger than in Tajikistan,

and hence the consumption of food products by Armenian peasants dropped as a result of the reduction of the state market fund to a lesser extent (since they produced food products at their farms) than in Tajikistan, where cotton pushed out grain crops, legumes, orchards, kitchen crops, and fodder crops, and their sales in shops became smaller and smaller. Moreover, if we remember that in 1990 per capita retail turnover in Tajikistan made up only 50 percent of the respective index in Armenia for foodstuffs and not more than 60 percent for other goods (besides, its value was the lowest among all the republics of the former USSR), it becomes evident why its further sharp decrease in Tajikistan affected the situation to a greater extent than in Armenia or in any other republic.

Thus, by 1991 the rapid reduction in consumption (in terms of reduction of per capita turnover) in Tajikistan contributed to an aggravation of sociopolitical conditions that was more severe than in any other NIS of Central Asia.

AGGRAVATION OF ECONOMIC CRISIS IN THE NIS IN 1992

The economic crisis in all the NIS in 1992 was aggravated by a number of factors: the disintegration of the USSR; the declaration of independence; the amorphous character of the CIS and lack of any superstate (or interstate) economic bodies with power; the desire of the governments and local authorities in each NIS to meet the needs of their own country or region and to limit the exportation of goods beyond the boundaries of their territories. All of these factors had, by 1991, resulted in a substantial reduction of the volume of interrepublican trade; the trade in consumer goods was reduced nearly twice.¹ In 1992 this tendency became more evident.

With the dissolution of the all-union ministries that controlled the flow of goods has come a situation whereby the interstate agreements concluded by the governments of the NIS are not fulfilled by enterprises, which are free now to organize deliveries based on payment in cash or on barter in order to ensure maximum profits. With this in view, they choose their buyers and suppliers. This is what President A. Akayev of Kyrgyzstan colorfully said: "We have signed a bilateral agreement with Russia. If it could work, we would not need any CIS: we are 70 percent connected with Russia. But when our representatives come to the territories and regions of Russia they hear 'We don't care about what you have signed between higher authorities, we have our own point of view.' After that we have tried to use horizontal (direct) links with Russian regions. And now we have timber, oil, steel. The agreements achieved by higher authorities simply serve as 'green lights.'"² However, in the absence of any developed market infrastructure and experience in a market economy, and in some cases as a result of artificial obstacles to goods exchange in the form of licensing, the establishment of

direct links began slowly and with difficulty. This caused the slowdown of goods turnover, production undercapacity because of a lack of raw materials, and finished products overstock.

In the majority of cases, deliveries met only 30 to 50 percent of the amount stipulated by contract. As a rule, no preference was given to neighbors, the so-called coreligionists. That these agreements were not met inevitably affected industrial production and the economy as a whole.

A second important factor of production decrease involves uncontrollable and uneven inflation for products of various branches of industry that have remained 90 to 100 percent state owned but not controlled as before from the center. Here the state monopoly and the extremely concentrated nature of industry has been revealed to its full extent. If we compare the sectoral dynamics of wholesale prices of industrial enterprises in 1992 (table 2.11) with 1991 we see that prices grew, on the whole, from 11 times in Turkmenistan to 24.7 times in Kazakhstan, this growth being not so high in Armenia (10.5 times) in Uzbekistan and Tajikistan as well (14 and 14.3 times) and rather high in Russia (20.5 times) and Kyrgyzstan (17.6 times).

Prices rose extremely unevenly in the states, in branches of industry, and in groups of industrial branches. For example, from January to August 1992 in Russia (table 2.11) and, to a greater extent, Kazakhstan and Armenia, electric power prices rose more (in Armenia 2.5 times and in Kazakhstan 1.7 times) than in the industry as a whole, while in Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan they were maintained by the government at a level almost two times (Turkmenistan) or even four times (Tajikistan) lower than the general level of wholesale prices.

In the oil and gas industry, prices were kept down (except for Turkmenistan) by the state at a level below the average (in the gas industry of Kazakhstan five times lower, of Uzbekistan 1.5 times lower), of Russia 2 times lower), and in coal mining, the liberalization of prices resulted in their extremely high growth. Under these conditions, of the mines and mining associations jacked up prices for coal, without thinking of the consequences.

The monopolistic approach in the field of pricing is evident in ferrous and nonferrous metallurgy: price increases were 1.5 to 3 times the average in different countries.

The light and food industries, in contrast, are oriented directly to final consumers—people whose income was limited and constantly lagging behind inflation. That is why the index of wholesale prices for these products was usually lower and in some cases even 1.5 times lower than average. However, many products in this group stagnated because their prices were too high, and hence their reserves substantially increased. Additionally, the dollar-to-ruble exchange rate, particularly in the second half of 1992, made it extremely profitable to export various products—coal, ferrous and nonferrous metal, refrigerators, air conditioners, machine building products. The result was maintenance of the deficit and higher prices.

Table 2.10
Indexes of Wholesale Prices of Industrial Enterprises, January–August 1992, to the Same Period in 1991
(times)

Country	Indu- stry (total)	i n c l u d i n g														
		power indu- stry	Fuel extracting industry			Fer- rous metal- lurgy	Non- fer- rous metal- lurgy	Chem- ical indu- stry	Oil- chem- ical indu- stry	Machine building	Wood, wood- work- ing, pulp and paper indu- stry	Con- struc- tion mate- rials indu- stry	Light indu- stry	Food indu- stry		
		total	oil	natu- ral gas	coal					total	auto- motive indu- stry	Agri- culti- ral mach- ine indu- stry				
Armenia	10.3	25.1	-	-	-	-	23.1	12.1	32.6	11.0	-	-	7.9	10.6	6.1	10.6
Kazakhstan	19.2	32.4	17.5	14.8	3.9	23.5	31.5	33.7	28.7	15.5	17.0	16.0	14.8	12.9	9.6	12.8
Kyrgyzstan	17.8	-	34.1	-	-	34.1	-	-	-	45.1	-	26.1	8.0	10.7	9.2	11.0
Tajikistan	14.3	3.7	26.0	8.9	-	68.5	-	52.6	15.6	-	27.8	-	7.4	12.0	7.9	8.5
Turkmeni- stan	8.3	4.6	10.5	7.6	10.4	-	-	26.2	11.1	27.9	-	-	8.2	6.8	5.5	8.7
Uzbekistan	10.3	8.9	22.0	9.8	6.4	24.2	26.3	39.7	11.6	4.2	15.7	16.6	9.9	9.8	9.3	8.3
Belarus	17.3	22.7	28.3	20.1	-	-	35.4	-	26.9	20.0	22.2	35.1	19.5	15.1	17.3	8.6
Russia	16.5	18.1	16.6	15.0	8.0	22.2	28.5	24.3	19.4	22.7	15.6	16.0	15.4	14.3	13.1	15.6

Note: for Azerbaijan data are not available

The uneven performance of prices for various groups of industrial products greatly affected agriculture. In 1991 the purchase prices of many products were at the level of that year, but in 1992 the index of prices for industrial products became 10 to 24 times higher in different countries (table 2.11). Thus, peasants' income from sales of grain and other products was depreciated. But even in the autumn of 1992, the state prices of grain in Kazakhstan and other NIS grew twenty to thirty times, while the cost of a combine increased forty-four times and that of a tractor seventy-one times.³ On the whole, the prices of many industrial products used in agriculture increased to a greater extent than the prices at which the peasants sold their produce. This disparity eventually affected both agricultural and industrial production. In essence, there could be no winners; everyone, especially final consumers, lost.

The lack of single coordinating general economic and financial body restrained the development of the NIS and impeded mutual payments of even the largest enterprises. The demand for advance payment resulted in a further increase of mutual debts. For example, according to President N. Nazarbayev of Kazakhstan, the debt of the Magnitogorsk integrated iron and steel works (Russia) to its main supplier of iron ore, the Sokolovsko-Sarbaisky ore dressing plant (Kazakhstan), reached 6 billion rubles; the debt of 110 Russian power plants to their main coal supplier, Ekibastuz, was 6 billion rubles. If production at Ekibastuz stopped, the entire integrated power grid of the former USSR would break down.⁴

All of these and other factors aggravated the economic crisis, which manifested itself in reduction of the national income, agricultural and industrial production, and consumption of goods and services. As a consequence, there was a sharp drop of living standards and rapid differentiation of people according to income.

The main economic indexes of the NIS for 1992 are given in Table 2.11. The sharpest drop in national income occurred in Armenia; it was little more than 48 percent of the level of 1985. The same occurred in Tajikistan, where in June the national income made up only 56 to 57 percent of the level of 1985; over August through October, it dropped to the "Armenian" level and might be even lower because of the civil war.* In Kyrgyzstan the national income dropped in 1992 by 19 percent, in Azerbaijan by 28 percent. In Uzbekistan by 13 percent and in Kazakhstan that index was somewhat better: 13–14 percent. Only Turkmenistan was in a more favorable position; the national income reduction made up "only" 10.5 percent.

*According to A. Abdullojonev Prime Minister of Tajikistan, by the end of December 1992 80 percent of the country's industry was destroyed and in the south of the republic 100 percent. In spite of the good yield, there were harvested only 100,000 tons of cotton instead of 700,000.⁵

Table 2.11

Main Economic Indexes of the CIS Countries, January–August 1992 to the Same Period in 1991 (percent)

	A z e r b a i j a n	A r m e n i a	K a z a k h s t a n	K y r g y z s t a n	T a j i k i s t a n	T u r k m e n i s t a n	U z b e k i s t a n	R u s s i a	B e l a r u s	T o t a l f o r C I S
Actual national income	71.9	57.4	85.8	81.0	69.0	89.5	87.1	78.0	89.0	79.9
Gross volume of industrial production	76.0	47.5	85.2	73.2	75.7	83.3	93.8	81.2	90.4	81.8
Index of wholesale prices of industrial enterprises	12.6 times	10.5 times	24.7 times	17.6 times	1423.0	11.0 times	14.0 times	20.5 times	24.7 times	21.0 times
Production of consumer goods (including strong drinks)	76.0	45.8	78.5	63.5	72.1	85.8	100.4	84.6	94.9	85.0
Production of animal products at agricultural enterprises:*										
- meat (in live weight)	77.0	44.0	70.0	76.0	68.0	81.0	77.0	78.0	79.0	77.0
- milk	70.0	58.0	78.0	72.0	79.0	97.0	92.0	83.0	81.0	81.0
- eggs	72.0	33.0	82.0	86.0	65.0	91.0	66.0	88.0	93.0	85.0
Purchases of animal products at the farms of all categories:*										
- cattle and poultry (in live weight)	59.0	25.0	61.0	68.0	48.0	76.0	83.0	71.0	77.0	70.0
- milk	61.0	31.0	72.0	64.0	73.0	99.0	87.0	76.0	76.0	75.0
- eggs	70.0	36.0	74.0	71.0	59.0	68.0	64.0	75.0	92.0	75.0
Shipping of cargo by general-use transport	51.1	20.3	80.1	47.1	43.0	75.0	79.3	75.7	77.0	75.0
Retail commodity circulation:										
- in actual prices	462.0	209.0	609.0	379.0	322.0	511.0	451.0	759.0	838.0	756.0
- in comparable prices	37.0	27.3	61.5	33.0	27.9	62.0	68.7	60.9	73.9	63.3
Volume of paid services:										
- in actual prices	454.0	302.0	515.0	444.0	360.0	408.0	459.0	590.0	725.0	591.0
- in comparable prices	32.0	28.0	52.1	58.0	32.0	67.4	58.3	64.9	71.5	64.1
Index of retail prices for consumer goods, including urban markets	1150.0	714.0	943.0	10.5 times	10.4 times	837.0	667.0	12.3 times	11.3 times	11.8 times
Population incomes	499.4	239.6	669.0	430.0	341.0	707.0	519.0	754.2	821.0	748.0
Population expenditures (without savings ¹ increment)	499.0	241.4	481.0	350.0	306.1	447.0	444.0	747.3	825.0	710.0

* January–August 1992 to the Same Period in 1991

None of these countries had ever seen such dramatic declines in production of commodities and services in peacetime. Moreover, since in previous years and particularly in 1991, the crisis had already been manifested in all branches of economy and in all the NIS except for Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan, a per capita national income turned out to be lower than in 1985, so its further drop was felt more keenly. In Azerbaijan per capita income was reduced by 41 percent as compared to 1985, in Uzbekistan and Kyrgyzstan by 13–14 percent, and in Kazakhstan by 22 percent.

In almost all countries except for Armenia and Turkmenistan, the decline in industrial output was not so great as in the national income. It fluctuated from 6–8 percent in Uzbekistan, 15 percent in Kazakhstan, 17 percent in Turkmenistan to 24 percent in Azerbaijan, 25 percent in Tajikistan, 27 percent in Kyrgyzstan and 53 percent in Armenia. If we take into account the dynamics of production in previous years, it would appear that in comparison with the level of the reference year 1985, the decline in production was greatest in Armenia (2.5 times), Azerbaijan (21 percent), Tajikistan (15 percent), and Kyrgyzstan (about 14 percent). In Uzbekistan and Kazakhstan this index decreased by only 2 percent.

The crisis seriously affected heavy industry in the NIS, but this was not yet a serious problem. Until recently production had often been increased for the sake of production, so structural reforms were needed. These reforms were aimed at obsolete enterprises producing noncompetitive products distributed by the commanding-administrative system.

The fact that the recession affected the production of consumer goods was much more dangerous. The summaries of production of foodstuffs for nine months of 1992 show that the food industry was affected most seriously in Kyrgyzstan and Armenia where the output of products decreased by 57 and 50 percent, followed by Tajikistan (37 percent), Azerbaijan (30 percent), Kazakhstan (27 percent), Turkmenistan (20 percent) and Uzbekistan where the output of products was maintained at the level making up 90 percent of the value in 1991. Sharp decline in output was observed as well in the textile and footwear industries of all the states except Uzbekistan.

The data covering light industry show that during 1992, the maximum drop of production in this branch was observed in Armenia (54 percent), followed by Tajikistan (14 percent), Kazakhstan (15 percent), Azerbaijan (13 percent), and Kyrgyzstan (6 percent). In Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan, the output of goods increased by 5 to 16 percent. (For comparison, in Russia the output of goods by light industry was 19 percent lower than in 1991.)

This drop especially affected the production of household appliances and other goods for cultural and household needs. And again it was Armenia that suffered most as a result of the decline in output of those goods (reduction by 53 percent), followed by Tajikistan (42 percent), Kyrgyzstan (30 percent), Turkmenistan (19 percent), Uzbekistan (10 percent), and Kazakhstan (8 percent). Evidently, the high industrial potential of Kazakhstan and

its effective integration and relations with Russia in the field of industry have contributed to maintaining its relatively high production level.

Thus, the degree of the drop in industrial production differed by country. Nevertheless, all major groups of industrial branches were affected: fuel and energy, metallurgy, chemicals, machine building, light and food industries, and household appliances. And if the reduction of production in heavy industry could provide the start for restructuring the reduction of output of consumer goods indicated that the economic crisis was not fostering any changes in favor of consumer goods.

The crisis directly affected the population and contributed to the unprecedented reduction of consumption of foodstuffs and industrial products. While the decrease in output of coal, presses, and metal-cutting machine tools could immediately affect only the workers of the mines and plants and result in lower wages and then unemployment, the drop in production in light industry at enterprises producing household appliances directly and immediately affected consumption.

Unlike industry, plant growing, the most important branch of agriculture, is seasonal, and in the first half of 1992, all the NIS consumed the grain, legumes, potatoes, vegetables, fruits, and fodder harvested in the summer and autumn of 1991. The harvest was unsatisfactory. By the end of November 1992, the grain was harvested in most NIS. The yield in Armenia was somewhat higher than the previous year (300,000 tons). In Azerbaijan (1.3 M tons) and Tajikistan (0.29 M tons), the yield of grain and leguminous crops (without maize) met the level of 1991; in Kyrgyzstan (1.5 M tons) it was 9 percent higher; in Turkmenistan (0.77 M tons) 50 percent higher. According to estimates, the yield in Uzbekistan (2.2 M tons) increased by 76 percent. Kazakhstan, the bread basket of the region, harvested a record crop. The yield reached 29.5 M tons (as compared to 12 M tons in 1991), the average yielding capacity growing from 0.65 to 1.5 ton/hectare.

The purchase of grain for reserve was successful. By the end of October, the purchase of grain (296,000 tons) in Azerbaijan was at the level of 1991; in Armenia 61,000 tons (20 percent more); in Kazakhstan, 11.6 M tons or 3.7 times more; in Kyrgyzstan, 142,000 tons (5 percent more); in Turkmenistan, 219,000 tons (2.68 times more); in Uzbekistan, 837,000 tons (1.57 times more), and in Tajikistan, only 11,000 tons or 47 percent of the very low level of 1991.

The data permit the following conclusions. First, the government and regional authorities in Tajikistan do not have at their disposal substantial grain reserves. Even if the civil war ceases, the country will completely depend on the deliveries of flour and cereals from other countries.* In case

* According to Prime Minister of Tajikistan to get through the winter up to the new crop yield, the country needs about 1.5 M tons of grain.⁶

of further war, certain districts and regions will be threatened with hunger, particularly in the areas of the railway blockade.

Second, in spite of the rather good crop yield (the average yield per hectare increased 1.5 times) Armenia will depend, as before, on the import of flour and cereals from other countries. Breadlines and rationing may exist here from now on.

Third, the leaders of Uzbekistan and Turkmenistan have put the rural area under strict controls and, using both administrative and market methods (rise in purchase prices for grain), have managed to increase their funds and meet their demands better than the previous year. However, they will have to import grain as before.

Finally, because of favorable weather conditions in 1992 and high crop yield, Kazakhstan has received powerful means of impact on the neighbors interested in grain purchases—starting from Russia and finishing with Kyrgyzstan. In the latter case the democratic President could not control the situation so strictly as his neighbours: the grain resources were insufficient and “fraternal help” of Kazakhstan was needed.

The yield of grain corn in Azerbaijan and Kazakhstan harvested by the end of October was somewhat higher, while in the rest NIS it was lower (in Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan—much lower) than the previous year.

Animal husbandry greatly depends on the availability of forage. According to estimates, the following amount of forage (in terms of 1 livestock capita) has been stored: in Azerbaijan, 0.82 ton (in 1991, 0.92 ton); in Kazakhstan, 1.36 (1.01); in Kyrgyzstan, 1.32 (1.27); in Turkmenistan, 1.07 (1.08); in Uzbekistan, 1.12 (1.13); and in Tajikistan, 0.6 (0.92). Thus, in Kazakhstan, the supply of livestock with forage has substantially increased (by 30 per cent); in Kyrgyzstan it has also increased but to a lesser extent; in Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan, and Azerbaijan this index has decreased but not substantially; while in Tajikistan it has decreased by one-third. Most important, these rates are very low and do not correspond to the requirements of animals. Even in Kazakhstan, where this figure is equal to the similar index in Russia for 1991, it is much lower than the requirement. This results in low yields of milk, low weight of animals, and other unsatisfactory factors of animal husbandry produce.

In summary, there is no threat of hunger (in the ordinary sense of the word) so far in the countries under consideration (except for Armenia and Tajikistan); however, the dependence on grain supplies from outside still exists, since no radical changes have occurred in the disposition of sown areas and agricultural production.

This is particularly true of crop growing. As for animal husbandry, the situation here is much worse. Lack of forage and combined fodder (because of crop failure in 1991), disparity of prices for livestock products and producers' and goods for this branch, and a weakening of economic links at all levels have resulted in the fact that in Azerbaijan, the production of meat,

milk, and eggs by agricultural enterprises (collective farms, state farms, subsidiary farms) has been reduced by 23–30 percent, in Armenia by 42–67 percent, in Kazakhstan by 18–30 percent, in Kyrgyzstan by 14–28 percent, in Tajikistan by 21–35 percent, in Turkmenistan by 3–19 percent, and in Uzbekistan by 8–34 percent. These data show that in 1992, the decrease in production of livestock products was much greater (two to three times) than in agriculture as a whole (though the forage was taken from the reserves of the yield of 1991). This situation was not so severe on individual peasant farms. But it is the produce of collective, state, and subsidiary farms that reaches shops, so the urban population severely felt the sharp decline in the production of meat, milk, and eggs. The situation was aggravated by the disintegration of the food distribution networks. It was not easy to organize purchases of these products (or obtain them through barter exchange) in the neighboring NIS. Due to the lack of foreign currency, imports have been reduced.

According to our estimates, in Azerbaijan the consumption of meat, milk, and eggs by the greater portion of urban population for eight months decreased on the average by 30–40 percent, in Armenia by 64–75 percent, in Kazakhstan by 26–39 percent, in Kyrgyzstan by 29–36 percent, and in Tajikistan by 27–50 percent; the consumption of meat and eggs in Turkmenistan by 24–32 percent, in Uzbekistan by 13 percent and that of milk by 36 percent.

The food supply situation in the NIS must be evaluated not only in terms of domestic production. In the past, these countries purchased (or received from the center) considerable amounts of grain, flour, cereals, and livestock products. Now they can think of the purchases in other “neighboring foreign countries” and of imports that became possible due to sales of the most valuable industrial raw material, cotton. In 1992 purchases of cotton (as compared to 1991) were lower: in Azerbaijan by 39 percent, in Kazakhstan by 15 percent, in Tajikistan by 50 percent, in Turkmenistan by 9 percent, and in Uzbekistan and Kyrgyzstan by 11 and 16 percent. Particularly poor were purchases of long-fiber varieties of cotton: by November 9, 1992, the corresponding index in Tajikistan made up only 14 percent and in Turkmenistan 51 percent of the level of 1991. Only in Uzbekistan the situation did not change for the worse.

The factors that mattered here involved the wish of collective and state farms to suspend sales in the hope that prices would rise. But the figures reveal unfavorable tendencies in the production of this currency-based product. In Tajikistan, in many southern districts, there was nobody to harvest the cotton: men were at war, refugees left their native land, and most of the yield was lost. In spite of the growth of cotton prices, the yield fell greatly, affecting the buying capacity and food supply of the NIS in the first half of 1993.

In considering the impact of the economic crisis on the level of potential

tension in the NIS, particular importance should be attached to changes in living standards. The worsening of general living conditions, everyday life, and the sharp decrease in real income contribute to a tense and even explosive situation, which may lead to social disorders, political action, and armed struggle. Of course, there may be various reasons for conflict, but often in search of an enemy, a source of all troubles, large groups of people agitated by their leaders and authorities direct their anger against those who are unlike, including the people of other ethnic groups or nationalities.

For that reason, it is necessary to study the dynamics of the real income of different population groups. The data must be used with caution but do give a good idea of the situation. The condition of people in the NIS was the most difficult in winter 1991–1992 and in spring 1992. As inflation increased pensioners suffered most. The real buying capacity of their pensions decreased 6 times in Armenia; in Azerbaijan and Kyrgyzstan 4 times; in Kazakhstan and Tajikistan 3–3.2 times; in Uzbekistan by 34 percent and in Turkmenistan by 60 percent. The pensioners living in large families, with their children and grandchildren with their traditional Oriental respect for old people and the wish to share all hardships, were better off than pensioners living alone, whose fate was desperate. Many people (not only pensioners) survived due to some reserves made at that time when foodstuffs were relatively cheap. But on the whole, old people had to limit their demand for food and to buy only the cheapest foodstuffs.

According to the official data, real wages and salaries for five months were reduced in Kazakhstan by 12 percent, in Uzbekistan by 16 percent, in Turkmenistan by 30 percent, in Kyrgyzstan by 50 percent, in Azerbaijan and Tajikistan by 55–56 percent, and in Armenia by 71 percent.

The data on average per capita cash income adjusted by the index of consumer prices (table 2.12) give a general idea of the living standards of the entire population. During this time, real income declined 5 times in Armenia, in Azerbaijan 3.7 times, in Tajikistan 3.3 times, in Kyrgyzstan 2.7 times, in Kazakhstan 1.9 times, and in Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan by about 40 percent.

From June through August in most countries of the NIS (except for Armenia), the situation was better: prices rose slowly, and wages and salaries, pensions, and scholarships in some countries rose considerably. At the same time, differences in income between those living in urban and rural areas started to increase. Cash income grew in urban areas, whereas in rural areas, the indexation of cash income was slow. Also, prices at collective farm markets lagged behind those of state and cooperative trade. This resulted in a very slow growth of income of peasants selling their products at municipal markets.

There appeared sharper differentiation in wages among specific groups of workers and employees, evidenced by an increased gap between average and minimum payments: an average salary was twice as large in Azerbaijan

Table 2.12
Indexes of Consumer Prices and Population Incomes, January-May 1992 to the Same Period in 1991 (in times)

Country	Con- sumer price	Mean per capita mon- etary income	Salary/ wages per one worker	Pens- ion	Stu- dents' allo- wance	Coefficient of forestalling growth of prices versus the growth of:				Indexes of actual:			
						Inco- mes	wages	pens- ions	allow- ances	mean per capita income	wages per one worker	pens- ion	allow- ance
Azerbaijan	8.3	2.3	3.8	2.1	4.3	3.6	2.2	3.9	1.9	27.7	45.7	25.3	51.5
Armenia	9.0	1.8	2.6	1.5	—	5.1	3.5	6.0	—	20.0	28.9	16.7	—
Kazakhstan	7.0	3.7	6.2	2.4	6.5	1.9	1.1	2.9	1.1	52.8	88.0	34.2	91.8
Kyrgyzstan	7.9	2.9	4.0	2.1	3.2	2.7	2.0	3.8	2.5	36.7	50.6	26.6	40.5
Tajikistan	7.9	(2.3)	3.5	2.5	—	—	2.3	3.2	—	—	44.0	31.6	—
Turkmenistan	6.8	4.1	4.8	2.7	4.3	1.7	1.4	2.5	1.6	60.3	70.6	39.7	63.2
Uzbekistan	5.1	3.1	4.3	3.4	5.0	1.7	1.2	1.5	1.0	60.8	84.3	66.6	98.1
Belarus	8.9	4.9	6.9	3.7	6.1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Russia	10.9	5.3	7.4	3.9	4.3	2.0	1.5	2.8	2.5	48.6	67.8	35.8	35.8

and Armenia, 6 times higher in Kazakhstan, 4.7 times in Kyrgyzstan, 2.7 times in Tajikistan, and 1.7 times in Uzbekistan. Intersectoral differentiation in wages also intensified: it was most rapid in industry, civil engineering, and transport and much slower in the cultural and art spheres, public education, health services, and science.

All of these indexes average values, calculated on the basis of different weights and with due account of the so-called consumer goods basket, which considers prices for purchased products and their correlation, ignoring food quality and a shift from more expensive to cheaper foods.

Besides, a single consumer market on vast territories of the former Soviet Union has disintegrated, since prices for many kinds of foodstuffs and goods vary within a very wide range, the spread of prices for sophisticated household appliances being less significant and that for a number of staple foodstuffs (bread, butter, milk, meat, etc.) showing a great difference. Buying capacity has decreased everywhere for household appliances and the most valuable foodstuffs and vegetables and in some countries (Azerbaijan, Armenia, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan) also for bread. Actually, it was bread that became the most important product in many people's diets, whereas there was no flour in Baku, Yerevan, Bishkek, and Dushanbe. This resulted in huge lines for bread, especially during irregular supplies. At the same time, prices for flour in Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan were relatively low (3.5 and 7.4 rubles in Ashgabat and Tashkent, respectively), while in Kazakhstan's capital, the price was as high as 23 rubles.

Comparison of incomes (wages) and prices for specific products clearly shows the drop in living standards. Values denoting the volume of retail commodity circulation in the so-called comparable prices and expenditures of population recalculated on the basis of retail price indexes (table 2.11) seem representative. Evidently, these calculations do not consider (or partially consider) the fact, that due to the deficit of most of goods, partial preservation of the coupon-card system of their distribution, as well as due to the activities of middlemen and speculators, actual prices for such goods for considerable part of population remained higher than those taken as a basis when calculating indices. However, on the other hand, both the indices reflect (though not precisely) actual volumes of total sales and actual expenditures, exclude from general estimations those commodities, which were not sold either due to their unavailability in shops/markets (deficit), or because of unreasonably high prices. The difference between these two rows of calculations is insignificant, though for different countries they may have opposite values: for example, whereas in Azerbaijan, Armenia and Tajikistan the decline in retail commodity circulation (in comparable prices) was greater than the reduction of total actual expenditures of population (also in comparable prices), in other countries it is the last figures that show the most abrupt reduction of consumption—on the whole and per capita.

In eight months in 1992, the volume of retail commodity circulation was reduced 3.7 times in Armenia, 3.6 times in Tajikistan, 2.7 times in Azerbaijan, and 3.3 times in Kyrgyzstan. So, if in Armenia living standards and volumes of per capita consumption before 1991 were considerably higher, in Tajikistan they were the lowest among the former Soviet republics, and the sharp decline in commodity circulation put the population at the brink of survival. In other NIS, the reduction of commodity circulation, though extremely painful, was not as disastrous: in Kazakhstan it fell by 38.5 percent, in Uzbekistan, it fell by 39 percent and in Turkmenistan by 38 percent.

Similar trends are shown by data on total consumer expenditures, which encompass purchases of goods and services, availability or absence of commodities and services, and the extent of savings and the nature of their use. According to this item (table 2.11) the consumption level in Kazakhstan fell by 49 percent (not by 38.5 percent), and in Turkmenistan by 49 percent (not by 38.5 percent). On the other hand, using this index shows a slightly better situation for Azerbaijan, Armenia, and Uzbekistan. Its value is higher than that of the total retail commodity circulation by 6.4, 6.5, and 8.2 percentage points respectively.

The blows dealt by the crisis to the public's purses were mitigated by a number of factors during the initial months, and even the first year. For instance, steep price rises caused people to use not only their current income but also part of their savings for purchasing consumer products. Furthermore, they tried to save on everything but foodstuffs, choosing relatively cheap ones; reducing or giving up the consumption of meat, sausage, butter, cheese, and canned food; and switching over to bread, cereals, milk and vegetable oils. They wore their old clothes and used appliances purchased previously; and their expenses for electricity, gas, central heating (if any), and urban transport were low. But in the very future, rent and public utilities costs will start growing similar to or even faster than prices for other products. People will need to buy new clothes and household goods. Then, those on fixed incomes will confront the problem: sliding to the social bottom, losing prestige and self-respect, declining living standards—maybe even poverty. Should the crisis persist and deepen, the army of the unemployed will increase. Those most affected will be scientific, cultural, and art workers. This situation may provoke socioeconomic and political-ideological radicalism and extremism, both "left" and "right," secular and religious.

Foreseeing this situation, each NIS will try to develop a long-term strategy and a short-term anticrisis program. Much will depend on how events develop. The point is that, as 1992 showed, the governments of Central Asian countries and Transcaucasia tend to follow Russia's lead in price liberalization, transition to market relations, promotion of private businesses, and so forth. If in a political sphere (democracy or authoritarianism,

isolationism, or integrationism) there will almost everywhere be differences, progress in the market system is inevitable despite the likely (and temporary) steps back, such as an intensification of a regulatory role for the state.

IMPACT OF THE ECONOMIC CRISIS ON TENSION INTENSIFICATION IN CENTRAL ASIAN COUNTRIES AND TRANSCAUCASIA

What happens in the future depends on a set of internal and external factors related to various aspects of public life. Let us consider some of them from the standpoint of similarities and differences among particular NIS. The resource potentials of these countries are quite different. Deposits of oil, gas, and coal have acquired vital significance. Armenia, Tajikistan, and Kyrgyzstan lack adequate reserves of these fuels or have mined deposits insufficient for meeting their requirements. Other countries can, for a number of years (in Turkmenistan, the process will be quicker), provide their growing needs in power and even export excess capacity, with profits used for normal functioning of economy, its restructuring and expanded production of goods and services.

Other mineral resources—ores of ferrous, nonferrous, rare-earth, and precious metals—are more widely spread in Kazakhstan. They are encountered in other Central Asian countries but are absent (only profitable deposits are considered) in Armenia. They become an additional income source but are not expected to be the driving force of economic progress, though they can foster the accumulation of the “initial capital” for implementation of programs on increasing economic efficiency and structural reorientation.

In these countries, the development of agricultural production was one-sided. In Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan, and Tajikistan, the development of cotton growing squeezed out food and fodder crops. Export of cotton, vegetables, and fruits inside the CIS and export of cotton to other countries based on prices close to world standards will provide funds for purchasing grain and cattle-breeding products and, at the same time, will be one of the factors contributing to close economic relations with Russia, Ukraine, and Byelorussia.

Competition of prices for raw materials, foodstuffs, and industrial products will greatly determine the trend toward rapprochement or repulsion within the CIS. With all the instability of production, agriculture gives the most favorable opportunities to Kazakhstan, where the requirements of population for grain, livestock production, and (partly) raw materials can be met using domestic resources.

The situation in Armenia is much worse. There, domestic production can satisfy requirements only in vegetables and fruits; the required proportion of imported foodstuffs, particularly grains and milk, is very large. In the near future, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan, Azerbaijan, and Kyr-

gyzstan will depend on the import of food grain and certain livestock products.

From the viewpoint of their numbers and educational level, the NIS labor force can accelerate economic development. However, most people, especially young people in rural areas (Tajikistan, Uzbekistan, part of Kyrgyzstan and Azerbaijan), are underemployed. The gap between the expectations of young people who have education and the poor labor market will become a factor intensifying sociopolitical tension.

Despite rather favorable conditions, all of the NIS found themselves in deep socioeconomic crisis in the end of the 1980s and beginning of the 1990s. Furthermore, if in Armenia and Azerbaijan the catastrophic decline of living standards and sharp reduction in national income and agricultural and industrial production is caused by the blockade and undeclared war, the situation in other NIS depends not only on objective factors but also on economic policy.

Political activity and struggle among ruling groups or regional distinctions can become decisive. It is hardly a coincidence that in no other place but Tajikistan, the least developed country (among the NIS under study) by practically all socioeconomic indexes, an open interregional war has been unleashed.

Which among the studied countries is most at risk for sociopolitical instability or even civil war? Using dropping rates of living standards for most of the population and the reduction of the national income value, by the fall of 1992 the worst situation existed in Kyrgyzstan; Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan, and Kazakhstan were in a slightly better position. The fact that small Kyrgyzstan was in an extremely unfavorable and complicated situation regarding the adequacy of domestic production of oil, gas, and coal has undoubtedly played a significant, even decisive, role; however, economic restructuring policies are important too.

All the NIS have proclaimed the inevitability of the transition to a market economy, although there are noticeable variations in the way this is occurring.

Some of the changes that took place during the second half of the 1980s (development of cooperation, promoting individual labor activities, establishment of farms, recognizing various forms of proprietorship, emergence of elements of a market infrastructure, such as stock exchanges and joint stock banks, etc.) did not alter the nature of the economic system existing in the former Soviet Union and separate republics, which were characterized by dominant state and state-farm proprietorship for means of production, compulsory planning of the national economy as a whole (including prices for all goods and services), rigorous centralized control over all economic processes, and so forth.

The first radical step toward a market economy was made in Russia during early 1992, when price liberalization was initiated. At that time, the other

republics followed in Russia's footsteps. Meanwhile it immediately became clear that if in Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan the process was gradual, preserving coupons for many foodstuffs and relevant donations, leaving the control body over economy mainly unchanged, and presidential structures (presidents themselves, before all) rigidly controlling the ruling pyramid from top to bottom, in Kyrgyzstan and partly in Kazakhstan the reforms took a more radical turn (resembling a Russian character). Prices appeared to be more "free" here; there was declared a program of privatization of commercial enterprises, personal services' sphere, small and medium industrial enterprises, as well as creation (in Kyrgyzstan especially) of farms.

N. Nazarbaev, president of Kazakhstan, stringently controlled the activities of both chief executives and ruling authorities, whereas the president of Kyrgyzstan, A. Akaev, lacked such a secure basis, constantly experiencing opposition on behalf of representatives of the former, presently disguised party-state "nomenklatura." Besides, share of population of the titular nationality was less than in other NIS which still more aggravating interethnic problems. Economic therapy (or surgery?) in these countries was more of a shock.

Price liberalization in all the NIS proved that under conditions of state monopoly, the "freed" prices revealed its state-monopolistic but not competitive nature. As a result, a price war has begun between enterprises, and the ones holding monopoly positions usually become winners. Price liberalization resulted in an ever more threatening price monopoly, and eventually it was the consumers who suffered.

Under such circumstances, the state's regulating role mitigated the blow delivered by prices to final consumers, and a selective support of certain sectors or enterprises has somewhat fostered the production of basic consumer or other goods, protecting the population from price tyranny by monopolists. At the same time the reforms themselves were impeded, restrained, or even sabotaged by the old government machinery. The dilemma was beginning to be clear: either push more decisively for reform, with the accompanying danger of sociopolitical conflict, or advance reform slowly maintaining relative sociopolitical stability. But if in the first case the exacerbating differences threaten to roll back all that has been gained, in the second case the danger of rolling back still exists because of the inertia of moving along the wheel-worn track of a planned, controlled economy.

At first, sociopolitical tension is more intense, and the reforms are threatened when they are more radical and their social value is higher, all other things being equal (absence of extra "shock absorbers" in the form of outside help, high revenues from sale of invaluable raw materials, etc.). However, in the NIS, it is very difficult, and, perhaps, even impossible, to complete within a short period deep transformations that will make market regulators work: privatization of some state property; establishment private farms to supply towns with basic (and, besides, increasing) foodstuffs; formation of

a market infrastructure; and, most important, changing the psychology of and reeducating millions of people, who for three generations have lived under a different, anti-market system.

The transition to a market economy will almost inevitably be rather extended, possibly lasting a complete historical period—a lifetime of one or two generations. In the near term, major economic and social (including interethnic) differences and conflicts will continue. In order to advance successfully on the way of reforms under the conditions described above it turns out to be obligatory to:

- have a strong ruling vertical structure ensuring relative political (and hence economic) stability;
- retain multivarious relations with more industrially developed republics of the former USSR, and primarily Russia, and by doing so avoid the collapse of the modern sector;
- obtain additional resources from Western and Eastern countries; otherwise the restructuring of one-sided economic system of countries in Central Asia and Transcaucasia, which is only aimed at the relations with Russia, will render next to unfeasible;
- facilitate a gradual evolution of the formerly single economic space and opening of the NIS in the direction of the West and East;
- and implement any (preferably radical) economic reforms essential to secure interethnic peace. Otherwise, (as the experience of the former Yugoslavia shows) no forward movement is possible. All other things equal, this effort is simplified in countries having less heterogeneous ethno-national composition of population, the more so in countries with an ethnic composition close to mononational.

These factors are required for reforms, but they are not sufficient. It is only a rare combination of some of them that will make a speedy progress to a market economy more feasible.

There is no time for reform during war and other sociopolitical conflicts. Reforms are actually blocked in Armenia (but for land allocation) and Azerbaijan. A mononational Armenia is fighting for the rights and survival of the Armenian minority distinctly localized in the Nagorno-Karabakh. Because of the power and food blockade, Armenia found itself on the brink of survival. Though from the point of view of living standards the situation is slightly better in Azerbaijan, the undeclared war and almost permanent political and economic instability, economic crisis, and the lack of a realistic long-term and medium-term strategy of reform hinder the implementation of radical transformations. In Tajikistan the aggravation of the struggle for power among various regional elites puts the country as a whole on the brink of survival and its economic situation on the verge of failure.

The grim experience of these countries demonstrates that the first prerequisite and the primary objective of socioeconomic progress is attaining

a balance of interests between diverse social groups and ethno-national communities in order to ensure civil peace and relative political stability. It refers both to Kyrgyzstan and Kazakhstan with their complex ethno-national structure and staunch reformists in the governments, and Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan, where the government is not so devoted to reforms.

External orientation is also gaining in importance. Maintaining relations with Russia (all other things being equal) strengthens the positions of reformers, at least when the reformers are in power in Russia itself, and, on the contrary, supporting links with theocratic and fundamentalistic regimes, no matter which efforts they make to disguise themselves, and which temporary unions and agreements they concluded with democrats, will inevitably bring about a social regress and weaken the positions of the most determined reformers.

Moreover, one cannot exclude the possibility that any NIS will become a kind of a settling basin for backward political and religious structures with relatively high (or rather, not very low) living standards (according to local regional criteria) by using profits from the sale of oil, gas, coal, and other valuable mineral resources on the world market. However, the formation of such a system will have to confront an outer environment (if other NIS will stick to the reform policy), and the opposition of some groups consisting of educated and West-oriented young and middle-aged people. To a great extent, the ratio of progressive and reactionary forces inside each NIS will depend on economic and all other policies in Russia, as regards its relationship with former Soviet republics, isolationistic or activist, the one followed by reformers or adherents of bringing back the imperial tradition.

NOTES

1. *Izvestia*, February 27, 1992.
2. *Argumenty i Fauty*, no. 45 (November 1992): 1.
3. *Izvestia*, November 16, 1992.
4. *Ibid.*
5. *Nezavisimaja Gazeta*, December 23, 1992.
6. *Ibid.*

III

Political Dynamics of the "New" East (1985–1993)

SERGEI A. PANARIN

POLITICS OR ETHNOPOLITICS?

Just like the ex-USSR as a whole, the former Soviet East has never been a uniform political entity. It was thoroughly Sovietized, which gave it a semblance of political homogeneity, but the depth, rate, and forms of Sovietization differed radically. Even within the framework of a single political structure such as the Soviet one, cemented by the rule of one party and sanctified by one ideology, that of communism, there remained striking dissimilarities. Some of these were well known but were either ignored or interpreted as insignificant. The dissimilarities that did not openly manifest themselves simply escaped notice, but that did not prevent their covert accumulation. All came to the surface in the first years of the Gorbachev liberalization and became more prominent after the breakup of the Soviet Union. That is why any analysis of the political dynamics of 1985–1993 should start with a division of the political terrain of the recently Soviet—and currently "post-Soviet"—East into specific areas or regions.

Orientalists have traditionally divided this part of the East into three major cultural provinces in accordance with the three great religions that prevailed in the territory during the pre-Russian and pre-Soviet periods: the province of the Christian church (Georgia, Ossetia,¹ and Armenia), the Islamic province (the Crimea, the North Caucasus,² Azerbaijan, Central Asia, and Kazakhstan), and the Buddhist province (Kalmykia, Tuva, and Buryatia). In many respects, this classification is pertinent today, but it needs to be amended. One must take into account the consequences of several decades of a centralized planned economy, the impact of political structure and ideology, and the administrative-territorial system of the USSR, which

radically affected every aspect of life in the Soviet East. If that approach is accepted, one must speak of four political regions instead of three cultural provinces: the Caucasian-Transcaucasian (CTR), the Central Asian (CAR), the Volga-Urals (VUR), and the Sayan-Baikal (SBR) regions. The first one includes Georgia (with Abkhazia, Adjara, and Southern Ossetia as its parts), Armenia, Azerbaijan (with Nagorno-Karabakh and the Nakhichevan Republic as its enclave), and the highland republics of the North Caucasus: Adygeia, Karachayevo-Cherkessia, Kabardino-Balkaria, Northern Ossetia, Ingushetia, the Republic of Chechnya, and Dagestan. Kazakhstan, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan (with Karakalpakstan), Kyrgyzstan, and Tajikistan (including the Pamir-Badakhshan Republic) make up the second region. The third region embraces Tatarstan, Bashkortostan, and Kalmykia (Chuvashia with its Turkic population, which was once dependent on the Kama Bulgaria and the Kazan Khanate, may have to be added to it in the future).³ The fourth region is composed of Tuva, Buryatia, and two Buryat national areas: Ust-Ordynsky (part of Irkutsk Region) and Aginskoye (part of Chita Region). A specific development is the westernmost enclave of the post-Soviet East: the settlements of the repatriate Crimean Tatars that have mushroomed in the Crimea, that is, on Ukrainian territory.

At this point a reservation has to be made. The northern highland part of the CTR, the whole of the VUR and the SBR consists of the autonomic units within the Russian Federation. Theoretically they could be regarded as one regionally undivided zone of eastern minorities in a vast area settled by Russians. Practically, this is impossible. The territory of the zone is parceled; it is ethnically and linguistically heterogeneous; its ethnic components differ significantly from each other and evince different degrees of Russianization. Moreover, some of its segments are culturally oriented to Islam, others to Buddhism, still others to Christianity. That is why this chapter is based on the economic-geographical principle of division into regions as the principal criterion. Wherever it was possible, two more criteria were taken into account: common historical destinies and the population's regional self-identification. On the combined scale of the three criteria, the highland republics, in spite of their administrative links with Russia, form a single and rather homogeneous region together with Transcaucasia. The VUR is a more artificial construct. Within its framework, Tatarstan and Bashkortostan can be considered truly alike by every criterion, but Mongolian Buddhist Kalmykia (officially the Republic of Kalmykia-Khalm Tangch),⁴ which adjoins both the Volga area and the North Caucasus, belongs to the VUR only from the economic and geographical standpoint. The SBR is a still more artificial formation. Although its Tuva and Buryat parts have a common border, this territorial linkage is not backed up by any close economic, historical, cultural, or ethnolinguistic ties; apart from their Siberian location and common adherence to Mahayana Buddhism in the past, there is nothing to warrant placing both in the same region.

From the purely political point of view, the proposed division into regions can be rationalized in two ways. First, it is easy to perceive the interdependence of political changes in the newly emerged states and/or in the autonomous units within each of the major regions, with the exception of the SBR. This interdependence is undoubtedly strongest in the CTR. Thus, the conflict between Georgia and Abkhazia has called forth a powerful wave of solidarity in the North Caucasus, which in the end enhanced the prestige of the Confederation of Mountain Peoples of the Caucasus (CHNC; since 1992, it has been called the Confederation of the Peoples of the Caucasus, CPC) and the Chechnya leaders, upset the internal political balance in Kabardino-Balkaria, and heightened tensions between the Cherkessian peoples, who implicitly support the Abkhazians, and the Turkic peoples (the Karachais and Balkars), who on the whole prefer to stay out of the struggle for the "righteous cause." The interdependence of political situations, albeit on a leaner scale, is also manifested in the CAR. In any case, there is no doubt that the Tajik internecine promoted isolationist trends in regional policy pursued by Turkmenistan, tough authoritarianism in the home policy of Uzbekistan, and the covert pressure the opposition in Kyrgyzstan brought to bear on President Askar Akayev. As to the VUR, there is undoubtedly a correlation of political changes, at least in the case of Tatarstan and Bashkortostan.

Second, the proposed division into regions is given substance by the fact that the dominant characteristics of political changes, viewed in the short run, differ considerably from one region to another. Even a brief survey of the political dynamics in the CTR will show that political life is marked by mounting conflict, and open, brutal violence. A specific feature of the CAR is the consolidation of authoritarianism at the top and the politicization of Islam at the grass-roots level. The VUR is above all characterized by an intense struggle to achieve equal political status with Moscow. As far as the SBR is concerned, its main feature, in spite of the obvious difference in the levels of stability in its Tuva and Buryatia parts, is the relative inadequacy of political activity of any form.

Both arguments in favor of the proposed classification acquire more substance if one draws up a chronicle of major political events for every region from March 1985 to April 1993 (see the Appendix). They reflect regional specificity and the universal tendency of political life, which is common to all the regions and is pushing through despite the intricate web of widely diverse developments. Generally, politically significant events of the past eight years can be assigned to three principal development trends. The first one covers the decorous official events that afforded full independence to the former union republics and a higher political status to the majority of the autonomic units within Russia, up to the level of independent states within the framework of Russia. The second trend is that of ethnic conflicts, such as the confrontation between Armenia and Azerbaijan over Karabakh

and inside it; the massacres in Fergana and Osh; the enforced withdrawal of Russians from Tuva and Chechens from Kazakhstan; clashes between the returning Crimean Tatars and the local authorities; conflicts between Georgia and Ossetia, Georgia and Abkhazia, Ossetia and Ingushetia. The third line of development has resulted in such events as the drawn-out power struggles in Azerbaijan, Georgia, and Tajikistan. The case of Chechnya is to be dealt with separately: there the three development lines are intertwined, with neither dominating the political process; on balance, the situation in Chechnya is closer than elsewhere in the post-Soviet East to the classical model of an anticolonial revolution of national liberation.

Events that come under the first trend have occurred everywhere. They symbolize the progress from the Soviet model of state structure—national quasi-statehood with as many as four levels of sovereignty (union republic, autonomous republic, autonomous region, and national area)—to two different models: a fully sovereign unitarian state of the titular nation and an autonomous or associated state, also of the titular nation, with limited foreign policy functions but practically independent in its home policy. Could this development be regarded otherwise than ethnic *par excellence*, since it is a constitutionally regulated drive aimed at turning titular nations into full-fledged, internationally recognized subjects of world politics?

In marked contrast to the first trend, the second does not manifest itself in all the regions—or, not in every part of them. Whereas the former begins to ebb toward the end of the period under review or begins to defy conventional legitimacy, as is the case in Chechnya, the latter is undoubtedly on the ascendant. It is only too obvious that it represents an extreme version of something that can be defined as an ethnic development with far greater reason than the constitutional performances. It is, of course, an extraconstitutional, nonrationalized, and most often violent action; this striving for sovereignty appears in a wide variety of forms, from a brutal mob fight to sophisticated appeal to the United Nations.

Finally, the third trend seems to stand in opposition to the two former ones. Events taking place in this sphere appear to be free from the overbearing pressure of ethnicity: their participants are brought into confrontation not by ethnic affiliation but by polar political views. Thus, in Azerbaijan, the warring parties were the old communist bosses and the democrats from the People's Front: in Georgia President Gamsakhurdia, who had proclaimed himself the nation's righteous father, and his former collaborators, who accused him of betraying the principles of democracy; in Tajikistan, the conservative bloc on the one hand and the radical alliance of democrats and Islamists on the other hand. But, in fact, in the first two instances national feelings and interethnic contradictions brought political fervor to a high pitch. As to the events in Tajikistan, they cannot be understood apart from the specific structural features of the Tajik ethnos. It is

therefore safe to say that ethnicity exercised an appreciable impact on events that developed in this sphere.

It appears that ethnicity was the key factor of developments in the Soviet and post-Soviet East over 1985–1993. Never mind that it manifested itself now as a roaring mob and now as a decorous legislative assembly. What really matters is that the political line was prompted by ethnic interests, that the inherent social diversity of these interests within one ethnos was sacrificed on the political level to the single purpose of the aggrandizement of the ethnos as a whole. Ethnic consciousness far too often tends to regard the nation-state as a symbol of such aggrandizement, and as a sacred state firmly encapsulating within its boundaries its present ethnic territory (and preferably the territory ceded in the past). No less frequently does the subject ethnos tend to infringe on human rights and menace the safety of the minorities.

However, this assertion is not equally applicable to every region of the "new" East. It fully corresponds to the situation in the CTR and is correct in its essentials with respect to the CAR. In the case of the VUR, however, the ethnocentric tendency in the political dynamics is at the very least counterbalanced by ethnically indifferent political aspirations. Of course, here as well as in other regions, the extreme nationalist groups, which are especially influential in Tatarstan, aim at an ethnocracy and even at a kind of national revenge for past injuries.⁵ But political activities in the VUR are also motivated by equally strong regionalist reasons. The local political elite seeks to secure firm political guarantees of the continuity of its power; industrial managers and entrepreneurs look forward to economic independence, and the mass of consumers hopes to create an island of prosperity isolated from the sea of Russian troubles. At the level of representative power and, to some extent, of executive power, regionalist goals are deliberately disguised as national ones (which is one of hiding the self-seeking group interest of the elite). As to the radical nationalists, they are often afforded freedom of action (so as to make good use of their belligerent rhetoric, pressing Moscow for constitutional, export, tax, and other concessions).⁶ It is certainly a very dangerous game. The semblance of total commitment to the national idea, simulated in order to impress the federal authorities, in the long run may make this idea take root in the ethnic consciousness of the Tatars, Bashkirs, and Kalmyks. In that case political leadership will be assumed by the wild nationalists. So far, however, leaders like Mintimer Shaimiev have been able to push them into the background after every display. Besides, even the hotheads have to reckon with the hard fact of the region's being an enclave, which, moreover, is closely integrated into the Russian national economy, as well as with its fractionalized ethnic structure, the high percentage of Russian population, and the considerable Russianization of the titular ethnos.

In the SBR, one can also observe a balance between ethnocentric and regionalist politics. True, here it stems from another source than in the VUR: from the rather sharp dissimilarity of the ethnopolitical characteristics of Tuva and Buryatia. Moreover, if both parts of the region share a common feature, it is the small scale on which ethnic consciousness is politicized. Even in Tuva during the events of December 1989–June 1990, most of the anti-Russian manifestations were an outburst of social protest by the marginalized Tuva youth rather than political actions targeted at achieving ethnocracy; in the local conditions, this protest was vested in attacks on the Russians. It is worth considering whether the “vodka blockade” launched by the Minusinsk truck drivers was actually a more effective sedative than all the efforts of the official authorities.⁷ There do occur micro-conflicts between Buryats and Russians—on a far narrower scale and on the lower level of everyday life—especially in the districts that in 1937 were severed from the Buryat Republic to be directly subordinated to the administrations of Irkutsk and Chita regions.⁸ But the first fiddle in the Buryat politics is undoubtedly played by regionalism. Even the strong movement in favor of the mother tongue and a cultural revival has not stimulated demands of a national-political nature, in contrast to the other regions. The movement appears to have chosen the path of regionalism, linking the solution of the Buryats’ problems not so much with a fully sovereign state of the titular nation as with a harmonious development of this multinational area,⁹ with Lake Baikal in its heartland. It sometimes seems that the unique lake is like a magic crystal radiating peace and pervading the Buryat consciousness with recognition of the crucial unity between people and environment over and above the division between ethnoses.¹⁰

To sum up, the impact of ethnicity on politics in the two eastern regions within the boundaries of the Russian federation is lower than that observed in both the CAR, which shares no common territory with Russia, and in the CTR, where the highland outskirts are part of the south of European Russia. This being the case, it is hardly reasonable to proceed with tracing the political dynamics of the four regions taken as a single whole. Rather, the VUR and the SBR should become subjects of independent research. On the other hand, it would be logical to assume that the difference is fictitious (or temporary) and that this would be proved by further developments. This conclusion rests on the following assumption: the greater the proximity of a titular Eastern ethnos to Russia—in the past or in the present—the firmer is its historical links with Russia, the more Russia-centric is our information about this ethnos, and the more difficult it is to grasp the meaning of the political processes going on in its territory, which are strikingly different from those in the Russian-settled territories. But if the differences between the VUR and the SBR and the other two regions of the “new” East are fictitious, resulting from insufficient or faulty knowledge, then the two former regions merit a special approach. It will be seen that the two opposite

points of view have a point of convergence, and it would be prudent to leave the VUR and the SBR out of the forthcoming analysis, limiting it to ethnopolitical dynamics in the Caucasian-Transcaucasian region and that of Central Asia.

THE CAUCASIAN-TRANSCAUCASIAN AND CENTRAL ASIAN REGIONS: DETERMINANTS OF ETHNOPOLITICAL DYNAMICS

Politics in the new East are dominated by ethnicity, which is most influential on the political scene of the CTR and the CAR. However, this conclusion is merely a point of departure for further research. It can be presumed that ethnicity can find different forms of political expression—both legitimate and nonlegitimate, through peaceful acts or conflicts, mob or elite performance. It can express itself in acts that fully dominate policies, or merely complicate their course, and so on. From the standpoint of practical policies, the obvious question is, What kind of action or what conjunction of actions is most typical of each of the two regions, or at least of their major ethnopolitical performers? To answer this question, one has to get down from the interregional to the subregional level. The first thing to be cleared is the conditions in which political action develops (becoming ethnic based in the process). For this, the two regions should be considered apart from each other.

This brings us to the problem of determinants of ethno-political dynamics. Regrettably, there can be no satisfactory solution to it, since there are still no sufficiently comprehensive and systematized data to reveal the specific features of the CTR and the CAR. Therefore, no set of determinants, including the one offered below, can be duly substantiated by statistics and reliable factual material. It is based on my knowledge of the two regions and my own experience in the field.

The determinants suggested are as follows: (1) resources at the disposal of a nation-state or ethnic territory, the current state of its economy, and the extent to which it depends on outside support; (2) changes in the population's living standards, reduction or increase in opportunities for conspicuous consumption; (3) the geopolitical position of a given republic or ethnic territory within the region and that of the region within the system of contiguous countries; (4) the extent of continuity between ex-Soviet and post-Soviet state and political, administrative, and management structures, the degree of their stability, and the extent of the nation's democratization; (5) the degree of the national elites' situational fitness (adequacy); (6) the degree of multiethnicity of a nation-state or ethnic territory, the share of the titular ethnic group in its population, and the prevalent patterns of ethnosocial stratification; (7) the extent to which the titular ethnic groups are consolidated into a nation; (8) historical memories of the ethnic groups,

the correlation between ethnic-positive and ethnic-negative impressions; (9) the degree of an ethnic group's alertness, the extent to which its ethnic consciousness is politicized, the strength of nationalist tendencies and their principal forms; and (10) levels of quasi-ethnic, interethnic, and internal political tensions (on the scale of ethnic area, state and region).

There is only one point on this list that needs to be substantiated. Does the matter of conspicuous consumption merit inclusion into a register of the main ethnopolitical determinants? I think it does.

First, the destabilizing role of conspicuous consumption is evidenced by the experience of the developing countries of the East. Jan Breman cited the experience of Gujarat in the 1960s to demonstrate how the transition of the upper-crust landowners to new patterns of consumption accelerated the severance of personal patriarchal ties between landowners and those who had no land; how the destruction of these ties gave rise to violence, which needed to be legalized; in the form of caste supremacy; and how this finally led to the exacerbation of social relations in the countryside.¹¹ Breman's work was followed by studies of the social results of the Green Revolution, which substantiated Breman's conclusions and carried them further. With regard to the Eastern urban milieu, one can recall the 1977 food riots in Egypt. After Nasser's death, the so-called fat cats of *infatih* indulged in conspicuous consumption, defying the boundaries prescribed by Islam. By contrast, the bulk of the cities' low-income residents were constantly threatened by poverty. Along with other reasons, this growing gap in living standards engendered an extremely tense atmosphere, in which the ruling on higher prices triggered a wave of popular indignation.¹²

No special research has been conducted on the issue of conspicuous consumption in the former Soviet East. Nonetheless, I am sure that in the Caucasian-Transcaucasian Region and in the Central Asian Region the orientation toward conspicuous consumption has a strong bearing on the ethno-political situation. Its influence might be even stronger than in India or Egypt for reasons that, taken separately, appear quite ordinary but that have come together to form a complex that is unique in many respects.

In both regions farmers practiced gardening on their small personal plots of land and on covertly privatized plots officially belonging to collective farms and state farms. Though the total area of land thus farmed was quite modest, those plots were highly productive by Soviet standards and brought in high revenues. Farmers had incentives to raise productivity, and the profitability of their work was guaranteed by the high demand in the USSR for subtropical farm products that emerged in the late 1960s. In this way, first the Caucasian and later Central Asian villagers accumulated funds that enabled them to proceed to new consumption priorities. At the same time, growing market demand for their produce, the inefficient state distribution system, and rampant corruption created the conditions for the circulation of large-scale shadow capitals.¹³ Socialist ideology and the repressive state

apparatus barred the shadow entrepreneurs from investing in production, thereby confining the reproduction of their capital to parasitic patterns. There also were serious hindrances to free interregional flow of capital, and so the accumulated fortunes retained their ethnic and regional affiliation. These two kinds of barriers resulted in saturation as well as in squandering part of the capital in the CTR and the CAR. This opened up opportunities for conspicuous consumption to a considerable section of the regions' population.

This is how there emerged in the CTR and the CAR groups of people who were prepared to take up new patterns of conspicuous consumption and possessed the necessary funds. The new patterns and their materialization were quick to appear, the former with the help of the mass media, which made Soviet society more open, the latter in the shape of imported goods, sold either in ordinary shops or (higher-quality foods) in elite *Ber-yozka* shops. Some of the conspicuous consumption articles were home produced. By Western standards, these were low-quality durable goods, but the gap between supply and demand in the former USSR gave an ordinary car or tape recorder the status of a prestige symbol. As time went by, such symbol-objects flowed all over Soviet territory, but the greatest influx was in the Soviet East.¹⁴ Before the breakup of the Soviet Union, a "Caucasian" set of prestige articles, viewed as something like a national standard, came to include an improved model of the Lada car, a videocamera, a Western-produced jeans suit and sheepskin coat, and a reindeer fur hat, though these articles had nothing to do with those people's national culture. The same is true of Central Asia though on a smaller scale.

To account for the concentration of such articles in specific regions, one has to probe into these regions' culture and history. In the past in the CTR and the CAR, as well as elsewhere in the East, consumption was a mark of belonging to a certain community, of one's personal status and that of the community in a given society. This tradition reached an extraordinary and sometimes shocking level (particularly in the Caucasus) precisely because of the coexistence of various ethnic groups rooted in different cultures within the framework of a multinational totalitarian state. With the totalitarian regime precluding free personal achievement, consumption and excessive acquisition was the only way for compensatory self-assertion. The suppression of ethnicity was another factor contributing to this tendency, but here the compensatory factor merged with ethnic self-identification. Ethnic traditions, like those of hospitality, patterns of entertaining guests, life-cycle rituals, conduct befitting a "true" Georgian, Azeri, Uzbek, or Kirghiz, were sustained, but they had lost their human dimension to become an increasingly rigid set of costly material symbols of ethnic identity. Paradoxically, no one was daunted by the fact that the new symbols were brought in from the outside by the budding market forces with their powerful internationalizing potential.

In this way, the race for conspicuous consumption came to reflect the striving for social status. Although restrictions imposed by the totalitarian system have been lifted, desired consumption standards have not become more accessible because of soaring prices. Rather, they are harder to achieve. At the same time the qualitative and quantitative fall of mass consumption standards has not yet reached the point of threatening physical survival and is not likely to do so in the future. As a result, the conspicuous consumption model is still in place but remains unattainable and becomes a source of sociopsychological frustration. Being both a social and an ethnic distinctive mark, and combined with the current changes in the ethno-social hierarchy,¹⁵ this factor also has a destabilizing impact on interethnic relations.

Let us apply the proposed set of ethno-political determinants to each of the two regions to see how it interacts with specific regional characteristics.

Caucasian-Transcaucasian Region

1. The CTR has an extremely unbalanced resource base. In the northeast of Caucasus and in Armenia, land is scarce, and the region as a whole, except Chechnya and Azerbaijan, suffers from an acute shortage of fuel and energy resources. The greater part of the region is hit by an economic crisis, which borders on collapse in Georgia and Armenia. The economies of all the region's republics and territories (except Azerbaijan, though with strong reservations) have been and are now even more dependent on outside support.

2. As early as the eve of *perestroika* there existed sharp differences in living standards within the region, between its parts and various social groups, though on the whole people there were better off than elsewhere in the USSR.¹⁶ The years 1985–1992 saw significant changes. Though the region appears to have recently amassed even greater wealth, most of it in the shape of conspicuous consumption articles, there are now much sharper property, social, and territorial differentiation; legal access to prestige articles for most consumers has shrunk.

3. Geopolitically the region has always been either a connecting bridge or a barring bulwark. The region's position and its ethno-political structure have always postulated (and continue to do so) its dependence, both geographical and political. The most vulnerable position is that of Armenia. Also vulnerable and dependent are the highland republics. It is Georgia and, to a lesser extent, Azerbaijan that have comparatively greater scope for geopolitical maneuvering.

4. State and political structures and those of administration and management in most of the CTR have all but collapsed. Authoritarian tendencies are on the rise everywhere, and opposition is being suppressed. The only exception is Armenia, which can boast some semblance of civilized rivalry between political parties. As for Georgia, it is a glaring example of legalizing

outright political violence; its main practitioners are to some extent reminiscent of traditional Caucasian *abrags*,¹⁷ but they look even more like criminal offenders. In North Caucasus the Confederation of the Peoples of the Caucasus, a structure parallel to official authorities, is fast gaining political influence.

5. In some parts of the region—Adygeia, Karachaevo-Cherkessia, Kabardino-Balkaria, North Ossetia, Daghestan, Adzharia, and Nakhichevan—there is still some continuity between former and current power structures, so the local elite can still cope with the situation. Elsewhere in the region, elites with a renewed membership have come to the top, and in most cases they fail to control the situation fully. This is best seen in Georgia, where, for all of Shevardnadze's political experience, the central authorities are unable to keep in check various gangs, including those that formed the backbone of Georgia's national armed forces. In Armenia alone, the refurbished elite seems to live up to its functions. Another feature typical of almost all of the region's elites is their considerable or full criminalism.

6. The region's most peculiar feature is probably its multiethnic mosaicism. The ethnic composition of all its republics, with the exception of Armenia, which is virtually monoethnic (95.3 percent of its population are Armenians), is mixed; on the aggregate, various ethnic minorities often account for a considerable share of a republic's population. Titular ethnoses make up the bulk of the population of Georgia (70.1 percent), Azerbaijan (82.7 percent), and Chechnya and Ingushetia (70.3 percent). In Ossetia, Kabardino-Balkaria, and Karachayevo-Cherkessia, their predominance is not so heavy, ranging from 45 to 60 percent, and it is not in evidence in Adygeia (22.1 percent). In Daghestan as many as ten ethnic groups are recognized as titular. Together they account for 80 percent of the population, the Avars being the most numerous.¹⁸ As a result of interethnic conflicts, state and ethnic borders tend to become the same in the worst affected areas, and the share of titular ethnic groups in the total population is going up (e.g., the conflicts between Armenia and Azerbaijan, Northern Ossetia and Ingushetia). The flow of refugees to contiguous areas makes these even more multiethnic, as is the case with Krasnodar Territory.¹⁹ Finally, the populations of all the region's territories and states are socially divided along ethnic lines. On the one hand, this rigid stratification rules out serious interethnic competition in many fields of activity; on the other hand, due to this rigidity, ethnocentric policies that forcibly break the existing pattern of ethno-social stratification prove extremely painful economically and politically.

7. The consolidation of ethnoses into nations is relatively low throughout the region, again with the exception of Armenia. There exist rival quasi-ethnic groups, mostly clan-based or of local cultural orientation, which tend to assume a strong political coloring. Clan-based groups play an extremely important role in highland communities (the Chechen *taips* are the most

typical example),²⁰ while local cultural entities prevail in Transcaucasia. The latter groups wield the most political influence in Georgia. On the one hand, the centuries-old rivalry between the two ancient centers of Georgian statehood—the western and the eastern—is still in evidence; on the other, division into smaller historical units (Megrelia, Svanetia, Guria, Imeretia, Kakhetia, Khevsuretia, etc.) retains some ethno-political value.

8. Historical memories are of immense importance for the region. Ethno-negative memories are on the ascendant: people tend to concentrate on the wrongs they suffered from their neighbors and the past glories of their titular ethnic group. This clearly nationalistic egocentric mentality scares ethnic minorities. The only peoples who today appear to have mutual ethno-positive memories are those of the Nakh-Daghestan and Abkhaz-Adygei language groups.²¹ This, incidentally, is the backbone of the Confederation of Peoples of the Caucasus.

9. Ethnic alertness is extremely high in the region.²² Ethnic consciousness is strongly politicized. This politicization, however, is based largely on traditional (clan-based, local and cultural) ties and is effected through traditional forms of communication (such as hearsay and popular gatherings). All this tends to give a strong archaic overtone to political views. As they clash, the ethno-nationalist tendencies give a provocative boost to each other, failing to assume any rational form. Fueled by myths, ethnic stereotypes, conflict-provoking memories, and situational psychoses, for the most part they are very aggressive.

10. Finally, the region is characterized by medium levels of quasi-ethnic tension and high levels of interethnic tension, which has erupted into clashes in Transcaucasia and in some parts of the North Caucasus. Also high are internal political tensions in the region's countries, though their intensity varies. Consequently, tension is high on the regional scale in general.

Central Asian Region

1. The CAR is better provided with natural resources than the CTR. It has rich reserves of valuable minerals and energy carriers. Some of these are mined for industrial use; others can be developed with the help of Western companies in the near future. The region has considerable land and natural resources and a sufficient labor supply. However, these advantages are offset by soil pollution, extreme water shortages, and an enormous rural overpopulation; local manpower, moreover, is ill fitted to industrial labor. Tajikistan's economy has been ruined by the civil war;²³ the economies of Kyrgyzstan and Kazakhstan, and, to a lesser extent, that of Uzbekistan are hard hit by economic crises. The only country with economic stability is Turkmenistan. Outside support is badly needed in Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan, as well as in Uzbekistan, though not so drastically. It is only Kazakhstan and, especially, Turkmenistan that can fend for themselves.

2. Toward the early 1980s, inequality in living standards on the territorial and social levels became even more noticeable in this region than in the CTR.²⁴ There is no reason to believe that the situation has changed since then. The desire for conspicuous consumption has tended to rise rather than decline. However, most families could not satisfy their material expectations. The consumption of the top money-making social groups in the region did approach Caucasian standards, whereas the bulk of peasants could maintain the traditional levels of consumption only by covert appropriation of public property, exploitation of child labor, intensive farming on their small personal plots and pastures, and at the cost of inferior food consumption by the family.²⁵

3. The geopolitical status of the region's countries is not defined clearly enough. For example, Kazakhstan's situation within the CIS framework appears highly advantageous, but in the event of the CIS breakup or a geopolitical reorientation, it may turn into an outlying area of the Islamic world, extremely vulnerable all along its borders except for the southern. Other republics, on the contrary, would in this event enhance their geopolitical status by leaning largely toward non-CIS countries. However, they all heavily depend on each other for security. Tajikistan is the weakest link. Geopolitical tensions provoked by drastic changes in Afghanistan threaten to tear it apart. But, as a whole, the CAR is much more capable of independent geopolitical performance than the CTR.

4. What distinguishes the region from among the other regions of the former Soviet Union is the high degree of the continuity of state and administrative power. The state dominates public life. The presidents rule in an authoritarian manner, with little regard for their representative oral bodies, which lack power. The only ones who have to reckon with the latter are Askar Akayev and, recently, Nursultan Nazarbayev. Tajikistan is the only country to have had a politically influential quasi-democratic opposition, but even there it has been defeated. In the meantime, seeking to preclude criticism of his regime, Saparmurad Niyazov (with Islam Karimov following in his steps) has started to tailor his charisma to the official cult of the nation's father.²⁶

5. The region's political elite includes mainly local ex-Soviet nomenklatura as regards both its composition (party-promoted officials, managers, educated officials of the first and second generation, and that part of the intelligentsia that has accepted the rules of the game) and its general tenor (widespread corruption, division into rival factions, clientage respect for rank bordering on servility). In addition to enjoying the advantages afforded by continuity, the elite has well-regulated links with traditional institutions.²⁷ This amounts to controlling the channels of the people's political engagement, enables the elite to manipulate political processes and, to adjust itself to changes in a pragmatic, flexible way. It should be borne in mind, however, that in Central Asia, the elite has so far been successful largely

because most of the situations it has been facing do not require anything beyond its customary political maneuvering. In Tajikistan alone, a new elite began to take shape on a relatively large scale; the word *new*, however, is probably an overstatement.

6. No country of the region is monoethnic, but they differ greatly in the degree of multiethnicity. The titular ethnos accounts for the largest share of the population in Turkmenistan (72.0 percent) and Uzbekistan (71.4 percent). The corresponding figures are far smaller in Tajikistan (62.3 percent) and Kyrgyzstan (52.3 percent) because of their large Uzbek and Russian-speaking minorities. Kazakhstan provides an example of ethno-territorial bifurcation, with the largest ethnic group, the Kazakhs (39.7 percent), concentrated in the republic's southern, western, and central parts; but they are still less numerous than the Slav minorities, who are solidly clustered in the north and east.²⁸ The years 1985–1993 saw migrations of Russians, Ukrainians, and people from among the nationalities forcibly deported to Kazakhstan (Crimean Tatars, Meskhetian Turks, Germans, Greeks, and Chechens)²⁹ from the conflict-afflicted and conflict-potential areas, as well as from ecologically unsafe zones (Fergana, southern Tajikistan, and the Aral Sea area). In the same years, the number of dealers of Caucasian extraction increased in the cities. Still another demographic trend has come to the surface: the Kazakhs, including those repatriating from Mongolia, are flocking to “their own” country, and they gradually are reaching the northern and eastern areas. Ethnic and social division between “Europeans” and “Asians” has been strongly linked to occupation and sphere of activity. Accordingly, the emigration of the former, which is gaining in scale, threatens to disrupt such vital systems as the power industry and health care.³⁰ At the same time there has been vast scope for competition between titular Asians and Asian minorities in such spheres as agriculture and trade. This has triggered scattered interethnic conflicts and is likely to do so in the future.

7. National consolidation in the CAR is even lower than in the CTR. Traditional division, often into many levels,³¹ breaks up ethnoses from the inside and turns political rivalry between political parties and movements into a smokescreen covering quasi-ethnic strife between subethnic groups, where political loyalty must depend on lineage rather than on personal choice. In Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan the prevalence of local and cultural-based communities is manifested in a relatively mild form, whereas in Tajikistan their domination is overbearing. Tribal systems still exist and are effective in Kyrgyzstan and, particularly, Turkmenistan. Both kinds of division often intercross or intertwine.

8. Historical memories in the CAR are as strong as in the CTR. However, the former region has some features that favor more peaceful ethnic relations. Firstly, intraethnic injuries were often stronger and left deeper scars in people's memory than those committed by “outsiders.” Another conflict-

moderating factor is the region's religious uniformity. Third, memories are still alive of the existential community of the Kazakhs and the Kirghiz, as well as of the political and cultural community of the Tajiks and the Uzbeks. The most painful historical record seems to have been that of relations between free nomad clans and despotic khanates, who have a long record of mutual wrong (for example, between the Yomud Turkmenians and the Uzbeks of Khiva, or between the Kirghiz and the Uzbeks of Fergana). The Kazakhs tend to revive memories of their enormous human losses resulting from forcible sedentarization and collectivization, for which they blame the Russians.³²

9. Ethnic alertness is lower in the CAR than in the CTR.³³ This also applies to the degree to which ethnic consciousness is politicized; in the CAR it works in a kind of roundabout way—through political movements with an internationalist Islamic image. Finally, local nationalist awareness appears to be weaker or perhaps more amorphous compared to that in the Caucasus. Information available on the essence of the nationalist ideas and the degree of their elaboration suggests that these are very poorly rationalized. At the same time the region's most developed nationalism, that of the Kazakhs, clearly has overtones of hysteria and compensatory aggressiveness.³⁴ On balance, however, strong state power, even if it fails to scale down nationalist tendencies, keeps them from rising to a higher pitch.

10. Quasi-ethnic tension in the region as a whole can be assessed as average, but it is rather high in Kyrgystan and reaches a peak in Tajikistan, where it has merged with political contention to produce the fiercest intraethnic conflict. Interethnic tensions are not as high as in the CTR, but in some contact zones they have a potential for flaring up. As for political tension inside the republics, its scale ranges from close to zero (in Turkmenistan) to above average (in Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan); on a regional scale, it can be roughly assessed as medium.

THE CTR AND THE CAR: DOMINATING TENDENCIES OF ETHNOPOLITICAL DYNAMICS

For all the heterogeneous character of the local elites and their division into factions in the CTR, it is the ethnoes in their entirety, with all their social components included, that act on the political scene rather than free public associations. No amount of talk about "bad" and "ambitious" politicians who set at odds "good" and "credulous" peoples, no amount of trivial recipes for securing ethnic peace through a balanced increase in the living standards of all the groups concerned or through cultural autonomy for all, can change the fact that at this stage, all or almost all of the region's peoples are involved in realizing their identities through interethnic confrontation. In keeping with the implacable logic of the national idea, people are bound to take part in it either through direct personal engagement or

by lending their sympathy and support.³⁵ The creation of the nation-state and its territorial integrity have become supreme values firmly embedded in the public mind. Politics has become ethnically motivated.

However, there are many facts that cannot be overlooked in this context, for example, the dramatic struggle between supporters and opponents of the ousted Georgian president Zviad Gamsakhurdia, or between the supporters and opponents of General Dudayev in Chechnya, or the confrontation of the Popular Front and the old-time nomenklatura in Azerbaijan. These developments cannot be directly ascribed to ethnic motives. They involved, and still involve, purely political elements of power struggles over issues such as the social basis of power and ways of building up the state and the social system. But these elements are not as independent as they might appear to be, for at least two reasons. The first is that almost all the sides involved resort to political mobilization of subethnic local and cultural-based communities (Gamsakhurdia engaged the support of the Megreles, Dudayev enjoys support from the highland Chechens, and Aliyev from the Azeris of Nakhichevan). This means that internal political struggle has strong overtones of quasi-ethnic rivalry between various subethnic groups in ethnoses that have not yet become homogeneous nations. Further, it seems to indicate that when ethnic rivalries invade politics, the commitment to ethnicity becomes a major obstacle to national consolidation.

The second reason is that whoever wins in intraethnic political struggle, politics becomes even more ethnically based as a result. The winners appeal even more fervently to ethnic feelings and generally tend to take a harder line vis-à-vis the ethnic minorities and neighboring ethnic groups. Things went this way after Abulfaz Elchibey was elected president of Azerbaijan. In a matter of days Azeri troops launched an offensive in Nagorno-Karabakh, with troops and war materiel deployed on an unprecedented scale. An even more illustrative example of this was the constitutional takeover of Gamsakhurdia, a democrat, from Gumbaridze, a communist figure. Gamsakhurdia began implementing the principle "Georgia for the Georgians." True, the first Georgian president only demonstrated the carriage of his convictions, for even before he came to power as leader of the opposition, he had threatened to drive out non-Georgians and those who sheltered them.³⁶ "Pseudo-democrat" Gamsakhurdia was succeeded by the acknowledged champion of democracy and internationally known peacemaker Shevardnadze. Quite soon, a temporary settlement was reached in South Ossetia; true, it was largely due to strong pressure from Russia. But this was followed by events in Abkhazia and by statements to the effect that it was worth sacrificing 100,000 Georgian lives to ensure the annihilation of all Abkhazians, with Shevardnadze failing to dissociate himself from them.³⁷ This might be dismissed as spontaneous utterances of hot-tempered southerners. But looking at the facts, one has to admit that the ethnically alien Abkhazians were crushed under Shevardnadze in the same way as were the South Osse-

tians under Gamsakhurdia. There is every reason to regard this as genocide, for although there is no purposeful destruction of life, there is regular destruction of the quelled ethnos's material base of life and of all signs of its cultural continuity and ethnic identity.³⁸ This ominous coincidence in the tactics of two leaders whose records differ so radically suggests that in the CTR, the national idea, originally aroused by politicians, has become uncontrollable, and they cannot keep it in check in direct perspective.

Clearly interethnic conflict has become the principal form of ethno-political activity in the region. It has assumed different shapes but shows a pronounced preference for armed struggle. Such a conflict harbors several components: the official government line to strengthen the unitarian (and, consequently, authoritarian) state of the titular ethnos's; the ethnocratic aspirations of the new political elite: the pseudo-historical rhetoric of nationalist-minded intellectuals; rampage and looting by criminalized elements; and mass mob hysteria. These tendencies and features are likely to dominate ethno-political activity in the region in the near future.

In the CAR, ethnoses cannot be said to have become subjects of politics in the same terms that apply to the Caucasus and Transcaucasia, for several reasons. Low urbanization levels is one of them. In the CTR in 1989 Karachaevo-Cherkessia, Checheno-Ingushetia, and Dagestan were the only republics where urban dwellers accounted for less than 50 percent of the population, whereas in the CAR, Kazakhstan was the only republic to have surpassed that level.³⁹ Besides, rural life-styles prevail in almost all Central Asian small towns. For these reasons, ethnicity in the CAR could not rise above the level of everyday concerns ("life for life's sake") and reach the sphere of political activity, aimed at promoting national interests, in whatever form they are formulated ("life for the sake of the nation"), as rapidly as it happened in the CTR. Another important factor in this respect was the negligible share of migrants from the countryside to the cities in the absolute growth rate of the urban population. As a result, Central Asia still does not have the troublesome social group of recently arrived urban dwellers, usually a source of all kinds of radicalism.

Another factor that should be noted is that ethnic consciousness is often politicized in a far from direct manner: through the politicization of Islam, which is known to prize religious community above tribal and national affiliation. Obviously power-holding groups in the CAR have done their best to monopolize their peoples' activity as subjects of politics and have succeeded in doing so, with the sole exception of Tajikistan. There have been no mass actions for the establishment of nation-states: former party "internationalists" have easily produced it everywhere.⁴⁰ Even Tajikistan did not produce anything comparable in scale to Georgia's "Round Table" coalition of parties and movements, or to Azerbaijan's Popular Front. In the CAR there is no record of political activity with nationalist slogans. And since the peoples of Central Asia proclaimed their independence, there

has been very little political struggle by Western or Russian standards. Authoritarian presidents can easily handle small opposition groups, with no regard for human rights and constitutional norms.⁴¹ There are many who are inclined to accept and justify this as the inevitable price to be paid in order to preserve regional stability.

In fact the calm and stability that seem to reign in the region are as illusory as desert mirages. Or, rather, the region's stability is mostly a short-term development. The recent tendencies of growing migration from the countryside to the cities threaten to upset this stability. So far the tendency has been observed only in the two most ethnically mixed countries, Kyrgyzstan and Kazakhstan. Rural youth have suddenly started to flock to the cities, sometimes settling in squatter camps.⁴² This is likely to create training grounds for future activists of mass nationalist parties and fundamentalist movements. Social inequality, usually revealed through the difference in opportunities for conspicuous consumption, is another factor fraught with political instability. Because of the sharp rivalry between local dealers and those of Caucasian origin, the social discontent of the indigenous low-income groups is quite likely to assume violent and brutal forms of opposing the "outsiders," who tend to flaunt their prosperity and are defiantly self-assertive.⁴³ The region has experienced the Fergana tragedy and riots in Novy Uzen (Kazakhstan), which may well be followed by a new radical cleansing to oust the Caucasians.

On closer inspection, Islam is seen to play a dual role. The principle of integration on a religious basis makes it hard for non-Muslims to acquire a status equal to the followers of Islam. The politicization of Islam in Central Asia seems to have added to the Slav minorities' feeling of being psychologically estranged. Also, the growth of the titular ethnoses' national consciousness after the breakup of the Soviet Union has given Islam a strong ethnic coloring: at the grass-roots level people have come to look upon Muslim rituals as a sign of ethnic identity. At present, Islam has another role thrust upon it. According to Graham Fuller,⁴⁴ the Kazakhs, who were the most hard hit by the twentieth-century repressions, social experiments, and Russianization, today clutch at Islam as a means of ethno-cultural revival, though it was not too firmly rooted among them in the past. These new aspects prevent Islam from playing a unifying role, and sometimes even turn it into a disintegrating factor, thereby aggravating the confrontation between Muslims and "infidels."

An extremely explosive issue for the region is that of state borders. Nowhere else in the former USSR were they drawn as arbitrarily as in Central Asia. In vast regions where society's territorial organization had always been dependent on irrigation-based agriculture and free pasturing, this created the basis for conflicts over land, water courses, and pastures to develop from micro-social ones (between clans or villages) to macro-social (inter-ethnic) and even political (interstate) conflicts. Current environmental fac-

tors and the situation with natural resources make such conflicts inevitable. The extreme shortage of water for irrigation is bound to bring to the fore, in an acute form, the issue of national control over water sources.⁴⁵ Another source of danger is that the republican borders were drawn in defiance of the national principle. Major peoples (Tajiks, Uzbeks, Kirgiz) were separated and found themselves living in two or three different states. Long-standing traditions of peaceful coexistence, cultural similarity, and bilingual traditions for a long time prevented or moderated conflicts. But the enhanced status of the titular ethnic groups following the gaining of full sovereignty is likely to disturb the balance of forces and distribution of resources at the lower level. Conflicts over land possession, an extremely vital issue for the ordinary people, may trigger irredentist action by minorities, likely to be followed by retaliation by ethnic majority mobs or by the state.

Finally, the authorities' monopoly on their peoples' political activity has a reverse side. It would be wrong to view the public of a region as absolutely inert and the authorities as fully stable. In the absence of real political institutions, the peoples' activity vis-à-vis the authorities customarily accumulates within traditional intraethnic communities. As a result, political aspirations are tied to and personified by quasi-ethnic groups. On the one hand, particularist consciousness, which persists in subethnic communities, becomes politicized, politicizing relations between them; on the other hand, social interests that cause intraethnic political struggle appear as ethnic interests, though in reality they are not. If the authorities fail to quell the opposition by conventional police methods, they seek to enlist direct mass support by playing on long-standing contradictions between communities; and if the opposition resorts to the same tactics, covert political struggle erupts into overt quasi-ethnic strife. Such strife can be as fierce as the most radical interethnic conflicts, and it may bring society to the brink of disaster. Tajikistan has long been following this road; the danger that Kyrgyzstan may follow suit is quite real.

These tendencies and specific features of ethno-political dynamics in the region, exacerbated by the ethno-territorial bifurcation of Kazakhstan, the tribalism of Turkmenian society, and the upsurge in Uzbekistan of Islamist tendencies, which are all the more dangerous because they are repressed, make the region one of the most potentially dangerous on former Soviet territory. Whatever form these pent-up contradictions may take—social explosion, interstate wrangling over frontiers, strife between local and cultural-based communities, or a flare-up of Islamic activities—all these actions will have an ethnic coloring, and many of them will be violent.

In this way in both the CTR and the CAR (though to a varying degree and not everywhere), the first part of the "ethnicity-politics-conflict" triad acts as the dominating subject with regard to the second, and its subjective self-realization makes policies in the new East highly fraught with conflicts. One is justified in saying that conflicts dominate politics inasmuch as they

assume ethnic form par excellence, either interethnic or quasi-ethnic. Both forms indicate that ethnic factors prevail over political ones, inherited affiliation over free, that ethnic security is put before that of the individual. Political conflict per se, either in its pure form—as public struggle over the issue of power and ways of society's development—or in a form tinged with economic regionalism, does not figure prominently in both regions. As for the relatively calm political development confined to strictly constitutional methods, which can solve contradictions through political compromise, it has a still lower profile.

CONFLICT KNOTS IN ETHNIC POLITICS: TYPOLOGY AND SYNOPSIS⁴⁶

The foundations of interregional typology of conflicts have been set forth above. These are, first, ethno-political conflicts and political (civil) conflicts proper. Considering the prevalence of conflicts of the former type, and also the thematic scope of the book, analysis here will be made of ethno-political conflicts. They can be typologized by using several criteria. Thus, they can be grouped in two large subtypes depending on who appears in them as the subject of action; conflicts are then ethnic or interethnic (a clash between two or more ethnoses) and quasi-ethnic (a clash between segments of one ethnos). Another criterion is the form of their manifestation; conflicts in such case are either real, expressed in open confrontation, or potential (for which serious prerequisites exist), from subtle to those on the verge of becoming real. Considered separately but according to the same criterion, real conflicts include those resolved by military means (armed) and those resolved by political means (political). Conflicts of the Fergana and Osh type do not deserve to be singled out as an independent variety: they are short-lived in their initial form, close to social violence, and soon develop into military or political, or long smolder as potential. Finally, the causal criterion is also quite possible. The author of the preceding chapter used it in a different context (ethno-functional and ethno-territorial conflicts). But since the direct causes and occasions for conflicts are more closely connected with the specificities of each region, the causality criterion will be used to elaborate more precise qualifications of conflicts directly in the process of their enumeration and brief description for the two regions, as of the beginning of 1993.

The Caucasian-Transcaucasian Region (CTR)

There is no clear delimitation between the military and political manifestations of the interethnic conflicts in the region. Of essential importance is also which form of conflict is attained through its participants' independent actions and which due to third-forces' involvement. The use of this

criterion shows that interrelations of ethno-political subjects involved in a real conflict within the region inevitably become more strained and evolve into armed hostilities when there is no blocking interference from outside. And all the known cases of reduced confrontation are ensured by subjects of politics outside the region. This means that within the CTR, the forces seeking peaceful settlement and compromise have no opportunity to influence the events.

The Armenian-Azerbaijan conflict is undoubtedly an interethnic military one. Combined in it are the ethnic conflict in Karabakh, which has a long history, and the interstate conflict between Armenia and Azerbaijan, which arose because Yerevan gave support to the Karabakh Armenians. Both started as political and turned into military. The Georgian-Ossetian, the Georgian-Abkhazian, and the Ossetian-Ingush conflicts, too, should be regarded as military.

In most of the armed conflicts, the clash is between the unitarianists (the titular ethnos) and the irredentists (an ethnic minority). The first qualification is evident; the second requires explanation. Irredentism of the Karabakh Armenians was clear from the very start of the conflict, the declaration of the Nagorno-Karabakh Republic being but a tactical move and reunification with Armenia remaining the ultimate goal. The Ossetians' irredentism, initially amorphous, rapidly crystallized under the pressure of Georgian chauvinism; the result was that the entire South Ossetian population supported at the referendum reunification with North Ossetia. The Abkhazian case exemplifies, on the face of it, a separatist movement disguised by statements in favor of reorganization of Georgia along federative lines. The logic of the conflict, however, is impelling the Abkhazians to rejoin the Adighe peoples either within Russia or in the boundaries of an independent mountaineers' federation, with the Confederation of the Peoples of the Caucasus as prototype. The unitarianists and the irredentists are equally affected by irrational phobias and blindly charmed by the heroic myths of their national history. But there is one important difference between them: the unitarianists have as their aim a great-power status in the region, that is, a higher level of their nations as political subjects; the irredentists are actuated by the fear of assimilation, the loss by their ethnoses of cherished identity. This is why they reject the full sovereignty and want to join already existing or planned state structures with "their own blood." Finally, from the humanitarian point of view, the irredentists' position is preferable, but geopolitically it involves a recarving of the political map of the CTR. The unitarianists' strongest argument in their appeals to the world community is their struggle for the inviolability of frontiers. In fact, the orientation to preserving the frontiers will no longer create stability within the region or along its external perimeter.

The most recent Ossetian-Ingush conflict stands somewhat apart from other armed conflicts. It appears to be a territorial issue: the Ingushes want

back Prigorodny District of North Ossetia and part of Vladikavkaz, its capital, as lands within the Ingush Republic before its abolition. The Ossetians reject these claims, saying that this disputed issue cannot be solved in such a direct way and that for overpopulated Ossetia, any reduction of its territory is impossible. The second half of the Ossetians' arguments reveals the true nature of the conflict: for the Ossetians and the Ingushes, the possession of the disputed area ensures full realization of all forms of subjective self-expression of the ethnos. The population density in Ossetia is indeed higher than in any other North Caucasian republic.⁴⁷ More than that, two dangers constantly loom before the Ossetians: the resumption of Georgian pressure in the south and Kabardino-Balkaria's toughening its position in claiming part of the Mozdok District. But at the same time, if the Ossetians fully retain Prigorodny District and Vladikavkaz, and the Chechen-Ingush frontier will be such as it is seen in Grozny, the recreated Ingush Republic will actually find itself nearly divided in two parts and will be a republic without a capital since the provincial town of Nazran will for a long time yet be unable to serve as such. The mutually exclusive, in essence, ethnic interests make the Ossetian-Ingush confrontation irreconcilable.⁴⁸ It might have come to compromise anywhere but in the Caucasus; in the existing ethno-political environment, the Ossetian-Ingush conflict has practically no chance of mutually acceptable settlement.

The real ethnic conflicts in their political form also seem to be based on territorial issues, but they actually prove complex conflicts as far as their causes are concerned. This is especially true of the conflicts between the peoples of Daghestan. The one in the present-day Kazbek District broke out between the Akkian Chechens, indigenous to the Aukhov District done away with in 1944, and the Avars, resettled at the same time on the exiles' lands. It is colored by irredentism: despite its temporary settlement many Akkian Chechens tried and obtained Chechen Republic's citizenship. Similar etiology is to be found in the conflict between the Lakhs in the Novolakhsky District, who voluntarily agreed to return to the Akkians the lands once taken from them, and the Kumyks of Khasavyurt, where the Lakhs are to be moved. The "chain reaction" started still another conflict: in 1991, Daghestan, in agreement with Georgia, decided to receive Georgian Avars, but the local Nogais opposed the authorities' decision to give to the repatriates land in the north of the republic. In overpopulated Daghestan, any attempt to solve old territorial issues is bound to trigger new ones, the more acute since they at once become entangled with other interethnic problems. Thus, the local clashes over land between Kumyks and Lakhs, and between Nogais and Avars, blend in with the broader context of tension in the relations between the Turkic and Caucasian peoples of Daghestan. The former think that their representation in the administrative bodies is disproportionately small because the latter have usurped all key positions.

Demands are therefore voiced to create a Kumyk and a Nogai republic, either as members of a federalized Daghestan or outside it.⁴⁹

In this case, tension has taken the form of a potential conflict close to a real one and caused by separatism. The potential category also includes conflicts between ethnoses leaving or intending to leave "dual" republics: between the Chechens and the Ingushes, the Kabardins and the Balkars, the Circassians and the Abazins, on the one hand, and the Karachais, on the other. Disputes concerning the demarcation of future frontiers and the division of state property are quite probable. Angry opinions are heard even now that some have unjustly received more than others.⁵⁰ Combined with the Ingush loyalty to Russia (counting on a resolution of the conflict with the Ossetians favorable to them) the ethno-cultural differences between the Adighes and the Turkis, and other circumstances that have made the Ingushes, Balkars, and Karachais practically refuse to participate in the actions organized by the Confederation of the Peoples of the Caucasus, can provoke a bigger conflict between the two mountaineers' coalitions.

There are other potential conflicts on irredentist grounds—for instance, the one between the Terek Cossacks who want the area of their residence to be returned under the Stavropol Territory's jurisdiction, and the rest of Daghestan's population, and the largely similar conflict between the Cossack population and the other peoples of the autonomous Karachai-Circassia. Even more dangerous is the situation that arose after the Lezghian Sadval movement took shape.⁵¹ It is characterized by separatism combined with irredentism. The Lezghians of Azerbaijan, subjected to forcible assimilation, and the Lezghians of Daghestan, although listed as the titular nations of the republic but more than others suffering from shortage of arable land and unemployment, long to be united in an independent Lezghistan. Since the centrifugal tendencies in Daghestan are gaining strength, and officials in Azerbaijan have taken measures to send Lezghian conscripts to the front and to settle the Azerbaijan refugees on the Lezghians' lands, the ground has been prepared for at least three conflicts: Sadval's political conflict with the authorities of Daghestan; a similar conflict between the Daghestan Lezghians and their close neighbors, in the republic, first with the Tabassaranians, whom the Lezghians regard merely as their own subsection and want to decide their political destiny contrary to the Tabassaranians' own desire; and an armed conflict between all the Lezghians and Azerbaijanians.

Mention should also be made of the knots of conflict outlined by the already voiced or expected demands for national-territorial autonomies for the Kurds and the Talyshes in Azerbaijan, as well as the Shapsugis. The potential interethnic conflict of Shapsugis with their Russian-speaking environment has come close to a real political one. Moreover, it can serve as a spark that will start the fire of sporadic hostilities between the units of Cossack organizations of the Kuban and the Adighe volunteers recruited to

serve under the banners of the Confederation of the Peoples of the Caucasus.⁵² The Kurds' and Talyshes' demand for autonomy together with the Lezghian movement can be used by Armenia in its own interests; the Armenian-Azerbaijan conflict will then acquire a third aspect, that of an anti-Azeri coalition of Armenia and the minorities in Azerbaijan. Azerbaijan, in turn, can try to capitalize on the old confessional split of the CTR and knock together against Christian Armenia an alliance of East Caucasian states with their Muslim culture. The first scenario is more probable than the second. Furthermore, both the Georgian-Ossetian and especially the Georgian-Abkhazian conflicts are fraught with the gravest danger of the mountaineer peoples' alliance's clashing with Georgia. The events in Abkhazia confirm this; the mountaineers-Georgian tensions is actually classified here as potential conflict on a purely formal ground: because the mountaineer volunteers' actions helping the Abkhazians are directed not by official administrative bodies, i.e. by the Confederation of the Peoples of the Caucasus. All other parameters show that this is an obviously armed conflict.

Quasi-ethnic conflicts are represented in the CTR by potential conflict between Adzharia and Georgia, between the "insular" Nakhichevan and the "mainland" Azerbaijan. Pragmatic regional factors are prominent in the emergence of the former: perhaps no part of Georgia is economically better off than Adzharia, and its Georgian (but Muslim!) population want to retain it by strengthening their autonomy.⁵³ The unitarianists, however, have strong positions in Tbilisi, while the marauding section of the Georgian army—at least before its defeat in Abkhazia—was pressuring their commanding officers to find another locality for a "campaign." Inner ethnic differences are even vaguer in the origins of the second knot. Geopolitical factors are determining here: both the leaders and the inhabitants of the republic acutely feel that they are cut off from the rest of Azerbaijan and that peaceful relations must be established with Armenia. In that they noticeably differ from the Baku rulers. There is yet another intermittent but nevertheless real conflict, with symptoms of being military, between Megrelia and eastern Georgia. So far it remains primarily political: Gamsakhurdia's supporters, most numerous in Megrelia, are combatting with the Tbilisi "usurpers." But the element of quasi-ethnic confrontation is strongly expressed, for the Megrels form a large local cultural entity within the Georgians, with a unique linguistic and even sociopsychological distinctions,⁵⁴ and with a tenacious memory of independent action in their history. Moreover, there long existed a historical, cultural, and political symbiosis between the Megrels and Abkhazians. Therefore, the Georgian-Abkhazian conflict can intensify the amorphous anti-Georgian sentiment among the Megrels.⁵⁵

Finally, political events in the CTR bear a strong imprint of the conflict between Russia and the Chechen Republic. As regards the Chechens, it

involves a definite anti-Russian sentiment but quite on a par with other components: the general democratic mood, infatuation with an Islamic revival, pseudo-political rivalry between factions with an underworld tinge, and a quasi-ethnic component between the highland and lowland Chechens. The desire for a strong national state and for the return to the lofty ancestral moral standards dominates the Chechen mentality and subordinates to itself these widely varying components. This mood, no doubt, testifies to mounting ethnic self-awareness, but at the same time, under its influence, the internal opposition is associated with a mafia, and the external enemy not with a nation but with the Kremlin, the Russian army, and other attributes of a colonial empire. Moreover, relations with this enemy automatically become primarily of an interstate nature. Consequently, despite the sharp activation of Chechen ethnic sentiment in politics, interethnic conflict has not become the leading form of its political action. As to Russia, its most important consideration is not the state of relations between the Russians and the Chechens but the fundamental issue of whether the precedent of secession will be permitted.

On the whole, the region displays a rich variety of conflicts. Dominant among them are those whose evolution is mainly determined by self-sufficient ethnic action in politics. And although quasi-ethnic self-identification complicates the conduct of many conflicts' participants and constitutes its determining factor in some, still the leading variety of ethnopolitical conflicts in the CTR is apparently interethnic.

The biggest in this category, and simultaneously instructive, is the Armenian-Azerbaijan conflict (AAC). It is older than others and has had the opportunity to unfold, develop, and pass through several stages. It created a sort of effect of infection: many of the tactical methods tested there were used by opponents who clashed in other conflicts. It has a heavy impact on the political situation in the region and has become an independent factor in world politics. Finally, it has given rise to a great deal of literature—first emotional journalism, then polemical or apologetic writings, and later scientific analyses.⁵⁶ There is no need to trace the events, since they are well known and comparatively well described. Mention should be made of but some of the lessons of the Armenian-Azerbaijan confrontation that shed light on the origins and the prospects of settlement of interethnic conflicts in the CTR.

The Armenian-Azerbaijan conflict is typical of the region. It is typical, above all, for the role of the past in its outbreak. In fact, all conflicts in the CTR have their roots in the strong and tenacious historical heritage of its peoples. It could not be otherwise since this strength and tenacity were necessary to the survival of ethnic individuality in an area that despite all the natural and geographical partitions was penetrable to the conquerors and geopolitically not independent. But whereas the history of a number of Caucasian conflicts does not go beyond the limits of the Stalin epoch, in

the AAC it is centuries long. The first line in the chronicle of the future conflict was written in the Middle Ages, when the Caucasian-speaking population of ancient Albania was split by linguistic and cultural assimilation in two uneven parts: the majority were Islamized and Turkicized, while the minority—the oldest ethnic substratum of the Karabakh Armenians—embraced Monophysite Christianity and its language, Armenian.⁵⁷

The conflict has another salient feature: a close link with the politics of Caucasian history makers outside the region. A by-product of the fifteen-centuries-long confrontation between the powerful southern states—from Rome and Parthia to the Ottoman and Safawid empires—was the loss of statehood by the Armenians and their dispersal throughout the Middle East. Of decisive importance in the rise of the AAC was the appearance of Russia in the region. It was St. Petersburg's policy to increase the "Christian element" in the conquered Caucasian population as the support to Russian rule that stimulated the Armenians' influx in Transcaucasia, including Nagorno-Karabakh, where from a minority they turned into a majority. This happened so quickly that it could not but cause friction between the old Turkic residents and the new settlers.⁵⁸ Moreover, one of the first links in the chain of events that culminated in the 1915 disaster was the Russian policy impelling Armenian nationalists to take risky political steps.⁵⁹ The question of whether Russia did it intentionally and how guilty the Dashnaktsakans themselves were is now more of academic than practical interest. What matters is that genocide did take place, that it had no justification, and that the immediate consequence of the massacre organized by the Young Turks was a qualitative change in the Armenian-Azerbaijan relations. From relations of simple, although not always peaceful, neighborhood they turned for the Armenians' into relations of ethnic survival in a suddenly shrunken territory. Gradually the painful edge acquired by Armenian perceptions penetrated the Azerbaijan mentality as well. Finally, the early Soviet politics deliberately wedged into Transcaucasia the Karabakh Autonomous Region and Nakhichevan as enclaves—as if specially designed to maintain the two nations' mutual suspicion. In the post-Stalinist era, Moscow preferred not to notice the problems.⁶⁰

The AAC is remarkable in still another respect: it shows the influence of ethno-social stratification on the process of formation of negative ethnic stereotypes that stir up interethnic enmity. The commercial and money-lending specialization of a considerable part of the urban Armenians, along with the rapid strengthening in Transcaucasia of the economic positions of the united and resourceful Armenian bourgeoisie and the rapid growth of Armenian nationalism, in some of its manifestations hurting national sentiments of the neighboring peoples, generated by the early twentieth century in Transcaucasia an intense and lasting Armenophobia.⁶¹ In their turn, the Armenians had impressed on their mind the stereotyped image of a savage "Turk," capable only of meaningless manual labor and always up to plunder and violence.

Finally, the AAC graphically shows the ambivalent content of historical memory and the national myth it cherishes. Myths help nations to survive in the hour of trial, yet they impair flexible adaptation to changing socio-historical conditions. The Armenian ethnicity to this day suffers from the memory of genocide and is charmed by the myth of the past martyrdom and glory of Haiastan, the ancestral promised land.⁶² Not so much developed previously but actively elaborated today, the Azerbaijan myth tells of the cunning and grasping neighbors who were long cheating and exploiting the simple-minded nation with a glorious historico-cultural past. Now, at last, this nation is ready to start realizing its age-old dream of a united and indivisible Azerbaijan in what it deems its "historical borders," from Erivan to Lenkoran and from Derbent to Hoi.⁶³ The two lines of reminiscences and the two myths are interconnected, for the very greatness of the feat of overcoming historical hardships is impossible without a hostile neighbor whose craftly designs have to be frustrated. The Armenian seems to need the idea of his Azerbaijan enemy to complete the set of symbols of ethnic identity, and vice versa.

No peace seems to be possible between Armenia and Azerbaijan until new impressions replace the old myths and memories. But what are these new impressions—the Sumgait massacre and the Khojali tragedy? Indeed, to rub salt on the old wounds is all they do.⁶⁴

Here we see the final aspect of the Armenian-Azerbaijan conflict as an archetype. It is hard, almost impossible, to settle. And about half of the conflicts in the CTR are like this: they defy solution. What has been forged by time over the centuries and become part of the ethnic mentality can hardly succumb to a quick political solution, especially at a time of a breathtaking shift in the balance of geopolitical power. Russia's withdrawal from Transcaucasia opened the area to a new round of Iranian-Turkic competition, and this, too, will more nourish than extinguish the clashes in Karabakh and other places. Important positive changes could be brought about by a well-considered and planned interference of the world community. Unfortunately, Western leaders remain insensitive to the contradictions tearing apart the CTR: the contradictions between human rights, ethnic interests, and the principle of inviolability of state frontiers. This is why the ethno-political prospects of the region as a whole, especially its Transcaucasian part, inspire no optimism. True, the opponents' mutual exhaustion can temporarily extinguish at least those of the conflicts that, as the AAC, exhibit an approximate parity of forces. But each time one of the sides thinks it has accumulated strength for a "final" solution, they will flare up anew.

The Central Asian Region (CAR)

The real interethnic conflicts appear in this region as one, nonpoliticized variety: sporadic outbursts of social violence by the titular ethnic majority

against national minorities. Widely known among them are the clashes between Kazakhs and Chechens in the city of Novy Uzen, Atyrau (formerly Guryev) Region, the Uzbeks' manhandling of Meskhetian Turks in Fergana, and the conflict between Kirgizes and Uzbeks in the Osh Region of Kyrgyzstan. The Fergana and Osh events were accompanied by heavy casualties and destruction and acts of vandalism and brutality, they had all the features of spontaneous ethnic aggression when the mob is the main actor. The Fergana massacre, moreover, was followed by an exodus of the victimized minority. This is largely the reason that there was no continuation in Uzbekistan: almost all the Turks and many of the Crimean Tatars, also hit by the pogroms, have left the republic. The epicenter of the "fight" against the minorities switched to Kazakhstan, where relatively minor clashes between Kazakhs and Caucasians—Azerbaijians, Chechens, Ingushes, and Kurds resettled from Armenia—occur regularly. Only in the last six months of 1992 were clashes registered in the cities of Petropavlovsk (July 25), Kustanai (July 27), Ust-Kamenogorsk (October 15–20), and Dostyk, a settlement in the Chimkent Region (December 10).⁶⁵

A distinct anti-Caucasian trend in the activities of the native population is to be observed, the exceptions being the Osh conflict and the facts of assaulting Crimean Tatars in Fergana. The direct causes are social protest against inequality (the "Caucasians" are, as a rule, wealthier than the local peoples), trade competition between the former and the latter, as well as a quite high criminality of the "Caucasians." Unrest was usually sparked by a murder committed by the "Caucasians." But this does not yet explain why thousands-strong crowds immediately gather in response, demanding to kick out the new arrivals from the "native land." Of decisive importance here seem to be the Caucasians' refusing to follow other people's way of life and the "Asians" protesting the behavior of the Caucasian ethnos, especially their commercial diaspora. The general background of the events—social and political—is also important. Much has been written about certain mysterious "antireformation forces," allegedly to blame for the Fergana slaughter.⁶⁶ Judging by the general nature of the mass disturbances, a conspiracy seems unlikely, but even if there were some instigators, they did not want to (or could not) turn the Fergana conflict into a political one. And there was an atmosphere of general frustration among the unemployed Uzbek youth.

The situation in Kazakhstan is different. National parties and movements work openly here, and each case of assassination of a Kazakh by a Caucasian is interpreted by them as "extermination" of the nation. They also demand an organized ethnic purge of the "ancestors' land," and the local authorities are beginning to heed such calls. Therefore, more and more severe anti-Caucasian actions, as well as their transformation into ethno-political activities, are to be expected.

The Osh conflict was also characterized by uncontrolled mob action and

the Kirgizes' desire to change the local ethno-social stratification in their favor, that is, to put an end to the Uzbek predominance in trade. At the same time, these two peoples, which have long coexisted, do not and cannot have any mutual ethno-cultural repulsion. The deep-rooted cause of the Osh tragedy lies in the desire of the titular ethnos, whose transfer from cattle breeding to land cultivation has been historically retarded, to assert their ethnic rights to the natural resources, which at the start of the transition fell into the hands of the neighboring ethnos. A similar scramble for natural resources, although on a considerably lesser scale, took place between the Kirgizes and Tajiks, inhabiting the two neighboring districts of Batken in Kyrgyzstan and Isfara in Tajikistan in the summer of 1989. The realization of the fact that their inter-republican borders, which formerly seemed but symbolic, now threaten to become state frontiers completely dividing the two peoples and cutting off their access to water and pastures proved to be a powerful aggravating factor in the two conflicts. The ethnic entity felt threatened, and this worsened interethnic relations.

In the CAR, clashes provoked by competition for scarce resources and by the struggle to preserve or reform the traditional patterns of ethno-social stratification (especially as regards ethnic predominance in the local markets) will play a prominent role among potential interethnic conflicts.

Such clashes, flaring up or dying, can kindle a big Fergana fire. These can be the renewed Osh and Isfara-Batken conflicts, the clashes between Tajiks and Uzbeks in the Leninabad region, or the quarrels in the Tajik enclave settlements within the Uzbek Fergana area.

The land adjoining the Aral Sea can become another site of conflicts over resources. This area has not drawn much attention, yet its potential for conflict is high. For example, a collision between the Turkmen and the Uzbeks is probable. Contradictions between the two peoples had appeared by the seventeenth century, with their roots in the different economic systems of the Uzbekicized population of Khiva and the Turkmen tribes living along the periphery of the Khoresm oasis.⁶⁷ The derivatives of this difference, and of the geopolitical balance of forces in Central Asia at the time, was constant vacillation of the Turkmen from the Khiva Khan's support to open hostility to him.⁶⁸

Negative ethnical stereotypes began to form. Abulgazi, a Khivan author of the seventeenth century, called the Turkmen "a people without thoughts and with little brain."⁶⁹ The Turkmen, on the other hand, looked at the Uzbeks as tricky, deceitful, and treacherous. The events accompanying the creation of the Khoresm People's Soviet Republic added to the old accounts new ones and proved one of the main arguments for Turkmenia to quit the unified Turkestan in which the Uzbek hegemony was becoming ever more obvious.

In contrast to other Central Asian delimitations, the one between the Turkmen and the Uzbeks has left less ground for conflict in interethnic

relations, yet there remains the Uzbek minority in Turkmenistan and Turkmen in Uzbekistan, and the problem of just distribution of the Amu Darya water has not been solved. It is possible that local Turkmen-Uzbek conflicts, reproducing the models of social violence of the majority against the minority, will provoke a political conflict between the two neighboring countries.

Mention should be made of the Karakalpaks. If they are to survive as an ethnos, they must move to unoccupied lands fit for habitation and settle there as an ethnic group, but no such lands exist in the overpopulated Central Asia. There is a chance, at best, for dispersed settlement. Yet the experience of Daghستان shows that even a minor intrusion into historical ethnic areas leads to tension. The resettlement, moreover, preventing a re-creation of the territorial unity of an ethnos, is almost certain to arouse resistance. The Karakalpak people, traditionally considered to be the most patient and passive nation in the Central Asian Region, have shown no political initiative. In the 1930s, they seemed to have faced their "transfer" from Kazakhstan to Uzbekistan with indifference and now appear apathetic in the face of genetic degeneration. It should be remembered, however, that Uzbekistan is a closed country as far as information is concerned, although there is an indication of growing national self-consciousness among the Karakalpaks. In 1926 12.5 percent of the inhabitants of the autonomous republic who considered themselves Karakalpaks recognized other tongues and not their own as native; by 1970 the respective figure fell to 3.4 percent.⁷⁰ The existence of autonomy provides at least a minimal chance for the rise and growth of separatist or irredentist ("return" to Kazakhstan) strivings, whereas the awareness of the dangers spelled by the death of the Aral Sea will prompt a tying together of the two issues of physical survival and national and political sovereignty.

A certain possibility of an autonomous and later perhaps of irredentist movement is to be forecast for the Zeravshan basin, where an important Tajik minority is concentrated in Samarkand and Bukhara, and the surrounding rural localities. Today its claims do not go further than cultural autonomy. Most of the local Tajiks, moreover, entirely bilingual and with an eroded ethnic self-identification, are ready to be satisfied with a scanty kind of such autonomy.⁷¹ Still, it cannot be excluded that any Tajik-Uzbek clash in other places, or a conflict political development in the Uzbekistan-Tajikistan-Afghanistan triangle might lead to ethno-political activity by some Tajiks in Uzbekistan.

The last zone of potential interethnic conflicts is the wide strip of territory where the titular ethnoses of Kazakhs and Kirgizes live side by side with the Slav minorities. The problems of access to the resources and employment also exist here; not they, however, will be the main causes of possible future clashes but the ethnocultural isolation of the "elder brother" and the exaggerated fear for its identity on the part of the "younger." In other words,

while in the south of the region, the sources of conflicts are earthly (literally and figuratively), in the north, they concentrate in the spiritual sphere, in the historical memory and the mentality of the peoples. A high degree of confrontation between the "Europeans" and the "Asians" in the northern CAR is evidenced by such facts as the quiet ousting of the Slavs by the internal Kazakh migration from the northern and eastern areas of the republic,⁷² as the protests of the Kirgiz nationalists on the occasion of the opening in Bishkek of the Slav University,⁷³ and by the threats of some of the Russian informal leaders to form mobile armed units to defend "their own folk" throughout the region.⁷⁴

Any of these potential interethnic conflicts can put an end to regional stability, especially if the conflict becomes the object of an ethnic policy. The greatest menace comes from a conflict between the Slavs and the Turks in Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan. But the key position from the point of view of stability as such is held by the Tajik clashes.

The conflict in Tajikistan has been well covered by the mass media, like the one between Armenia and Azerbaijan. But this is the only similarity. If one wants to find in the CTR a situation similar to that in Tajikistan, one should turn mainly to Georgia. A number of striking coincidences are seen. In both Tbilisi and Dushanbe, the long confrontation between the authorities and the opposition was resolved in the streets; the presidents elected by the people were overthrown, their posts abolished, and state councils instituted instead. The formulas tried and tested in Georgia were sometimes copied in Tajikistan; but this became possible because of the structural similarity of the two ethnoses and the strong local and cultural entities preserved within them. In Georgia, these entities proved to be but a complicating circumstance of the ethnic action; in Tajikistan, they have been the main cause of the quasi-ethnic struggle, with all its might directed inward to break the ties binding the people. It is true that in February 1990 there were anti-Armenian and anti-Russian actions, but until recently, the tendency of seeking guilty "aliens" has not widely developed.⁷⁵

There are two main theories concerning what was decisive in the development of the Tajik tragedy. The first sees a struggle between the "communists" and the "democrats." These terms are mere labels; "communists" were men from the old administrative bodies, a living embodiment of the original symbiosis of communist ideology, provincial bureaucratic practices, and the purely local, authoritarian, and paternalistic administrative traditions. The social content of the concept "democrats" is even vaguer, comprising intellectuals, rural youth, and young Muslim zealots. Generally, they represent a diverse and radical alliance of people infatuated with general democratic ideas and a politicized Islam.

According to the second theory, a scramble for power broke out between the "clans" but with a bitterness formerly unknown. The term *clan* is also a label. It is more correct to speak of elite groups, each of which—from

Hodjent, Garm, Kulyab, the Pamirs, and others—expresses to some extent in its actions the combined, socially undifferentiated needs of the local cultural entities on a “regional” level and relies on their support. But in its composition the “clan” does not reproduce in detail the entity, and each cleverly capitalizes on local sentiments to achieve narrow interests.

Both theories seem to be simplified. The Tajik conflict is certainly quasi-ethnic, but not because it was staged according to the scenario written by the “clans.” In the course of the conflict, the historically ossified structure of the entire Tajik ethnos happened to be the organizing element for the participants’ actions, planned and spontaneous. It was this circumstance that encouraged quasi-ethnic fissure on the occasion of political divergence. The impulse of the “new” elite to overthrow the nomenklatura nourished by the communist regime was sincere, too, and truly democratic as the “new” elite realized the fate of the people. The possibility of retaining the originally political character of the anti-Nabiyev movements remained almost up to the opposition’s victory in May 1992. Yet later the collapsing administration deliberately provoked open and violent clashes among the communities by supplying arms to the members of the Kulyab volunteer corps. Thus, the boundary between the political and the quasi-ethnic lines of the conflict, vague from the start, has been totally obliterated. The local cultural mentality was highly stimulated. Now the blood shed by the opponents was seen not so much as Tajik and not so much as the blood of their political enemies. The people began to differentiate between the blood of their “own folk,” which calls for revenge, and that of the “aliens,” which can be shed easily.

For this reason alone, the Tajik conflict is as far from solution as the one between Armenia and Azerbaijan. According to the scanty information coming from the Tajik emigrants, the Garm-Pamirs opposition (which is also Islamic-democratic) created resistance bases in the mountainous regions of Tajikistan. Arms, and not in small quantities, are reportedly arriving to these bases from Afghanistan. From Dushanbe there is news about terror, with people falling victim because of their accent or skin color. The first piece of information gives hope for retaliation; the second inspires thirst for revenge. In short, it cannot be asserted that the “communists” have won a final victory. The outcome of the Tajik riot is unclear, yet some trends can be traced.

First, politicized Islam has passed through its baptism by fire, become militarized, and acquired its martyrs. Its persecution will ensure to Islam the sympathy of many believers, and the number of its militants will be increased due to the desire to get an active compensation for the sufferings endured. Most important is the probability that the fundamentalists will gain strength and will adopt a politicized ethnic mentality even more, so that the political struggle in Tajikistan, already the scene of a quasi-ethnic internecine war, will largely lose its secular character.

Second, the consolidation of the Tajik ethnos into a nation has been slowed, and the vitality of a single Tajik state is called in question. Deprived of a strong state, this severely demoralized people is almost doomed to become a permanent threat to the security of its neighbors as well as a passive object of their selfish policy.

Third, prerequisites have been provided for a transformation of the Tajik feud into an interethnic conflict. This can happen on two scales: on a small scale in the attempt of the Iranian-speaking Pamiri ethnoses to encave its own state, that is, in the appearance of a new conflict knot as the result of a quite purposeful separatist movement, and on a large scale in the form of a Tajik-Uzbek conflict.

Rumors persist that Uzbeks living in Tajikistan are taking part in reprisals against the "democrats" in Dushanbe and that they allegedly specialize in performing the functions of executioners. Most likely these rumors are lies or gross exaggerations, but the very appearance of such rumors is symptomatic. It shows that searches for a scapegoat have started in Tajik society. In the atmosphere now existing in the country, any provocation or even an accident—any minor potential conflict with a fatal outcome—can lead to massive violent action. Since the Tajik and the Uzbek ethnic areas are intermixed, the forecast of a large-scale clash between the Tajiks and the Uzbeks will then become real.

At the same time it can be hoped that the Tajik conflict has been a lesson for the political elites in the CAR. This lesson is of little use so far to Turkmenistan, where the relative stability of intertribe relations is secured by the historic leadership of the Teke tribe and its numerical superiority, and also to Uzbekistan, where the political priority of the Samarkand section of the elite is rather firm. The same is probably true of Kazakhstan, where the national feeling is so sensitive that it is now able to prevent a replication of Tajik pattern rivalry. On the other hand the losses sustained by the Tajik people, including quite appreciable losses of its ruling strata, may moderate the ambitions of those who planned to use in their own political interests the old contradictions concerning the power of the "northern" and the "southern" tribal coalitions in Kyrgyzstan—the most probable site of the next quasi-ethnic confrontation in the CAR.

NOTES

1. Before 1917 one part of the Ossetians were held to be Orthodox Christians and the other to follow Islam. Missionary activities by the Russian church in the Caucasus were the most productive in Ossetia. Today adherence to the Christian faith is fast becoming a major part of the Ossetians' ethnocultural self-identification.

2. The degree of Islamization in the North Caucasus fell perceptibly from east to west: it was at its highest in Daghestan and at its lowest in Abkhazia.

3. Characteristically, there are close ties between the Tatar nationalists and the Chechens national radicals. See, e.g., *Nezavisimaya gazeta*, December 24, 1992.

4. *Izvestia*, February 22, 1992.

5. Cf. the utterance by Fauziya Bairamova, leader of the Ittifaq party: "Tatar land is not confined to Tatarstan... Half of Russia's territory is our land too." *Moskovsky komsomolets*, November 6, 1991.

6. A case in point are the events that developed around the attempt to hold in Kazan a congress of democratic forces of the national and territorial units within Russia. See: *Moskovsky komsomolets*, February 18, 1992; *Nezavisimaya gazeta*, February 18, 27, 1992.

7. The main part of goods transportation to Tuva is handled by truck service from Minusinsk. Consumption of vodka in Tuva is not much higher than in the neighboring regions of Siberia, but since it is alien to the indigenous culture, it provokes a good deal of aggression. That is why one may say that the Minusinsk drivers' refusal to drive into Tuva and the resulting sharp fall in the supply of vodka was instrumental in restoring peace in the republic. Concerning the events in Tuva, see O. Voronin. "Neizvestnaya voyna," *Stolitsa*, no. 4 (1991):18-19.

8. This statement is based on oral information I gathered during trips to Irkutsk and Ulan-Ude in the summers of 1991, 1992, and 1993.

9. It is worth noting that the idea of sustainable development has probably been more popular in Buryatia than anywhere in the former USSR.

10. In this connection, see Caroline Humphrey, "Buryaty: poisk natsionalnoi identichnosti," *Vostok. Afro-aziatskiye obshchestva: istoriya i sovremennost*, no. 5 (1991): 32-37.

11. Jan Breman, *Patronage and Exploitation: Changing Agrarian Relations in South Gujarat, India* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1974).

12. For more details see: S. A. Panarin, "Bunty protiv dorogovizny kak odna iz raznovidnostei sotsialnogo protesta gorodskikh mass na Vostoke (na primere sobytii 1977 goda v Yegipte)," in R. A. Ulyanovsky and M. A. Persits (eds.), *Borba za sotsialnyi progress na Vostoke. Istoria i sovremennost* (Moscow: Nauka Publishers, 1990), pp. 134-154.

13. There are different estimates of their total value, but all are unreliable. Information gathered on the micro level appears to be more trustworthy. Thus, in Central Asia in the mid-1980s, there were cases when, during the mutual settling of accounts between the *teneviks* (the shadow economy operators), banknotes were not counted but put on the scales in batches. See S. N. Polyakov, *Traditsionalizm v sovremennom sredneaziatskom obshchestve* (Moscow: Tsentralny Dom Nauchnogo Ateizma, 1989), p. 35.

14. Compare the estimates made on the basis of official statistical data (Rustam Narzikalov, "Dvuliky Yanus v serdtse Azii: nekotorye itogi 70-letnego razvitiya sredneaziatskikh respublik v sostave SSSR," *Vostok*, no. 5 [1991]:126) and the conclusion based on a field study (O. G. Dmitriyeva, "Srednyay Aziya: proval politiki paternalizma," Preprint of paper presented at the international seminar on regional diagnostic and regional administration held in Leningrad, December 6-12, 1990 [Leningrad: Izdatelstvo finansovo-ekonomicheskogo instituta, 1990], p. 38). A high concentration of motorcars was registered in both cases.

15. For example, the most prestigious and profitable posts are monopolized by

people from the titular nation, not infrequently with the help of laws on official state language.

16. See note 24.

17. The word *abrag*s initially denoted people banished from their own clan. Later it was applied to those who engaged in brigandage tinged with retribution to unrighteous rulers. Poetization of the *abrag*s and their ways is a typical feature of Georgian culture. For example, *The Parricide* a novel by the romantic writer Alexander Kazbegi, was quite popular in the nineteenth century. Stalin is known to have been fascinated by it as a young man. He even borrowed the name of the novel's protagonist, abrag Koba, for his conspiratorial name. In our own time, the epic novel about the noble *abrag* Data Tutashkhia by Chabua Amiredzhibi became a favorite of many Georgians.

18. The proportion of titular ethnoses was estimated in every case on the basis of the All-Union Population Census of 1989. See *Soyuz*, no. 34, 39 (1990). For Chechnya and Ingushetia, which were then a single republic, a single figure is given.

19. What is more, there is a flow of migrants of many nationalities from the conflict-fraught zones to the adjacent "peaceful" ones. Though formally not regarded as refugees, they are actually forced out of their long-time homes by interethnic conflicts or the threat of them. See, e.g. V. A. Purdenko, D. N. Bogdalov, and I. S. Terziyan, "Respublika Adygeia: mez hetnicheskie otnoshenia i problema migratsii" in *Rossiya i Vostok: problemy vzaimodeitviya*. (Moscow: Institute of Oriental Studies of the Russian Academy of Sciences and Scientific and Informational Firm Turan, 1993), pp. 223–229.

20. See M. A. Mamakayev, *Chechensky taip (rod) v period yego razlozheniya* (Grozny: Checheno-Ingushskoye knizhnoye izdatelstvo, 1973).

21. According to M. Yu. Roshchin and V. O. Bobrovnikov, research associates of the Institute of Oriental Studies of the Russian Academy of Sciences, who in the autumn of 1992 took part in field investigations of Hushtada village in Daghestan, the Avars make no secret of the fact that in the event of an armed conflict between Russia and Chechnya, many of them will side with the latter—despite the somewhat strained Avar-Chechen relations.

22. The ethnic alertness index calculated by V. E. Zotov for the fifteen titular nations of the former union republics shows that in 1989, the Georgians came first (index figure, 1.28), the Azeris were in the fifth place (1.12), and the Armenians in the eighth (1.06). V. E. Zotov. "Etnicheskiye konflikty na territorii byvshego SSSR: politicheskiye, ekonomicheskiye i kulturniye predposylki," unpublished (Moscow, 1992), p. 27.

23. According to the estimates of the prime minister of Tajikistan, Abdumalik Abdullodzhonov, in the northern part of the republic 80 percent of the industry was destroyed; the corresponding figure for the southern part is 100 percent. In the southern part, the prospective cotton harvest of 700,000 tons dwindled to a mere 100,000 tons. Total damage to the economy is comparable to the Tajikistan's national income over fifteen years. *Express-khronika*, no. 47 (277) (1992):5; *Nezavisimaya gazeta*, December 23, 1992.

24. In the CAR, 10 percent of the population owned from 21 percent (in Kazakhstan) to 55 percent (in Turkmenistan) of the total personal savings deposited in banks; in the CTR, from 20 percent (in Georgia) to 33 percent (in Azerbaijan). A. N. Illarionov. "Natsionalny pluralizm i ekonomika," in G. Guseinov and D.

Dragunsky (eds), *Ozhog rodnogo ochaga* (Moscow: Progress Publishers, 1990), p. 85.

25. See, e.g., Polyakov, op. cit., pp. 22–23, 36–37, 42–44.

26. The unmistakable landmarks include the law on the president's portrait; attaching Niyazov's name to army units; and his new title, Saparmurad Turkmenbashi, which also became the name of a street in the Turkmenian capital.

27. These are primarily the *mahalla* communities of neighbors and men's societies. Information about their utilization for political ends will be found in V. I. Bushkov and D. V. Mikulsky, "Obshchestvenno-politicheskaya situatsiya v Tajikistane. Yanvar 1992 goda" (paper presented to the Centre of Strategic and International Researches, 1992).

28. See note 18.

29. In the course of a single year, 1988, and the first months of 1989, 34,000 Germans departed the CAR; from 1987 to 1990, approximately 100,000 Crimean Tatars did the same. V. I. Mukomel, "Deportirovanniye narody v Srednei Azii: problemy i perspektivy sotsialno-demograficheskogo razvitiya, IV-ya Vsesoyuznaya shkola-seminar" *Demograficheskaya politika i programma razvitiya narodonaseleniya v usloviyakh suvereniteta respublik, Ashkhabad, 11–15 noyabrya 1991* (Ashkhabad; MGP "Garlavach"), 1992, p. 14. Towards the beginning of 1991, 65,000 Meskhetian Turks and 9,000 Chechens had left the region. V. Chervyakov, V. Shapiro, and F. Sheregi, *Mezhnatsionalniye konflikty i problemy bezhentssev*, pt. 1 (Moscow: Institute of Sociology of the USSR Academy of Sciences, 1991), p. 7.

30. Because of the emigration of the "Europeans," the number of doctors in state-run medical institutions of Dushanbe fell by 21.2 percent. *Sbornik statisticheskikh materialov 1989* (Moscow: Finansy i statistika, 1990), p. 21; *Vecherni Dushanbe*, 2.01 1992.

31. For example, ethnographers distinguish five or six levels of local cultural entities among the Tajiks. See Lyudmila A. Chvyr, "Contemporary Tajik Population of Central Asia. Self-Nomination and Self-Consciousness," in Vitaly Naumkin (ed.) *State, Religion and Society in Central Asia: A Post-Soviet Critique* (Reading: Ithaca Press, 1993).

32. This tendency was discerned by Graham Fuller. See Fuller, *Central Asia: The New Geopolitics* (Santa Monica, CA: RAND Publishers [R-4219-USDP], 1992), pp. 47–52.

33. The highest index of ethnic alertness is registered among the Kazakhs (1.18, third place in the USSR); after them come the Kirghiz (1.15, fourth place), the Tajiks (1.04, ninth place), the Turkmen (1.04, tenth place), and the Uzbeks (0.97, thirteenth place). The mean index for the CAR is 1.08 and for the CTR 1.15. Zotov, p. 27.

34. On this matter see V. A. Moiseyev. "Politika Rossii v Kazakhstane i Tsentralnoi Azii v osveshchenii noveishei kazakhskoi istoriografii i publitsistiki," in *Rossiia i Vostok: problemy vzaimodeistviya*, pp. 30–39.

35. V. S. Agadzhanian is right when he points out that this does not mean that all the representatives of the social groups that make up a nation take an active part in such a confrontation. V. S. Agadzhanian. "Armyano-Azerbaidzhansky konflikt," in *Etnicheskkiye konflikty v SSR: prichiny, osobennosti, problemy izucheniya* (Moscow: Institute of Ethnology and Anthropology of the USSR Academy of Sciences, 1991), p. 12.

36. This is what President Gamsakhurdia said in 1989 at a meeting in the village

of Akhalsopeli, Kvareli District. "Yuzhnaya Osetia: i krov, i pepel," (Vladikavkaz: IR, 1991), p. 54.

37. *Izvestia*, August 26, 1992; *Nezavisimaya gazeta*, August 26, 1992.

38. This was succinctly formulated by V. Voronov and Z. Achba, members of the Abkhazian Supreme Soviet, at their meeting with the research associates of the Institute of Oriental Studies on October 12, 1992.

39. What is more, the share of urban population dropped between 1979 and 1989 from 48.0 to 45.5 percent in Turkmenistan, from 41.2 to 40.7 percent in Uzbekistan, and from 38.7 to 38.2 percent in Kyrgyzstan. In Tajikistan this drop started earlier and was more dramatic: 37.1 percent in 1970 and 32.8 percent in 1989. Calculated from data in *Naseleniye SSSR 1988. Statisticheskyy yezhegodnik*. (Moscow: Finansy i statistika, 1989), pp. 15–26.

40. The December 1986 events in Alma-Ata could be regarded as the starting point of the national-political movements in the CAR. However, they came too early for the region. The implications of the December events became fully clear to all, including their participants, only after the experience of the Baltic republics, Moldavia and Armenia had provided a basis for comparison. But by that time Nursultan Nazarbayev was already at the head of Kazakhstan. He, too, misjudged the December events initially; later he realized that at the very least, they would have to be regarded as a symbolic beginning of the Kazakh revival and added himself post facto to the rank of the "decembrists," though in fact he had been at one with their opponents. Cf. *Nursultan Nazarbayev: bez pravykh i levyykh* (Moscow: Molodaya gvardiya, 1991), p. 180; *Alma-Ata, 1986. December* (Alma-Ata: Kollegiya "Audarma"—Altyn orda, 1990, p. 60); *Express-khronika*, no. 48 (271) (1992): 41.

41. See, e.g., Shohrat Kadyrov. "Dictatura i massovoye narusheniye prav che-loveka v Turkmenistane." Ashkhabad, December 12, 1992 (mimeo).

42. In Kyrgyzstan the young squatters have already become the kernel of the Ashar movement, whose goal is to revive the "Kirgiz idea and national way of life." *Express-khronika*, no. 40 (270) (1992): 3.

43. This opposition may assume illegal forms. See, e.g., one explanation of the reasons that led to actions against the Meskhetian Turks in Kuvasai, a Fergana city, in Maks Lurye and Petr Studenikin, *Zapakh gari i gorya. Fergana, trevozhnyy iyun 1992 goda*. (Moscow: Kniga, 1990), pp. 52–57.

44. Fuller, op. cit., p. 52.

45. Hidden but painful friction between Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan concerning the distribution of the Amu-Darya waters has repeatedly come to the surface. On this matter see the report of the expedition: "Aral 88," *Novy Mir*, no. 5 (1989).

46. For CTR compare: Mikhail Shumikhin "Yuzhnaya tverd Rossii," *Mezhdunarodnaya zhizn* (1992), Mart-aprel, pp. 46–54; for CSAR: Igor Rotar, "Mina, zalozhennaya kremlevskimi kartografami," *Nezavisimaya gazeta*, December 25, 1992.

47. In 1989 it was 79.7 people per square kilometer, while in Checheno-Ingushetia, next in population density, it was 66.8 people. See *Demograficheskii ezhegodnik SSSR 1990* (Moscow: Finansy i statistika, 1990), p. 8.

48. This is clear from the general attitude of the Ossetian press. See, for example, *Severnaya Ossetia*, November 12, 18, 25, 27, December 9, 12, 15, 1992.

49. *Moskovskiy novosti*, January 12, 1992 (Olga Glezer and Mikhail Shevelev, "Dagestan-Rossia v miniatyre"); *Nezavisimaya gazeta*, November 5, 1992 (Leonid Shtern, "Mezhdu Chechnyoi i Rossiyei. Nogaisky vopros na Kavkaze").

50. Compare the interview with one of the leaders of CPC, Musa Shanibov, and the statement of the National Council of the Balkar people. *Nezavisimaya gazeta*, September 2, 1992.

51. The Address to the Congress of People's Deputies of the Russian Federation by the leaders of the Sadval gives an idea of its position. "*Rossiya i Vostok: problemy vzaimodeistviya*," p. 405.

52. In this connection, see *Nezavisimaya gazeta*, February 7, July 2, 1992.

53. Of interest here is another interview, with the chairman of the Supreme Soviet of Ajaria, Arslan Abashidze. *Nezavisimaya gazeta*, October 17, 1992.

54. Noteworthy here are the old, but still important, observations by V. L. Velichko, who knew the Caucasus well: V. L. Velichko, *Kavkaz. Russkoye delo i mezhduplemennye voprosy* (Baku: Elm [reprint of the 1904 edition], 1990), pp. 30, 42–43, 54.

55. Even at the time of the highest popularity of Gamsakhurdia, the Committee for the Revival of Megrelia accused him of betrayal, because he did nothing for the liberation of Megrelia from Georgian domination. A leaflet issued by the committee, together with other documents characterizing the political situation in Georgia in 1988–1990, was kindly given to me by D. S. Raevsky.

56. See, for example, Hélène Carrère d'Encausse, *La gloire des nations ou la fin de l'Empire soviétique* (Fayard, 1990), pp. 89–131.

57. A. P. Novoseltsev, "Kavkazskaya Albania: problemy, trudnosti i puti ikh preodoleniya," *Vostok*, no. 5 (1991):190–200.

58. Even at the first stage of migration it was said: "The migrants themselves are crowded and press the Muslims, all of whom complain, and with good reason." A. S. Griboyedov, "Zapiska o pereselenii Armian iz Persii v nashi oblasti," in A. S. Griboyedov, *Sochineniya v dvukh tomakh*, Tom II (Moscow: Pravda, 1971), p. 340.

59. Documents of the Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, of the eve of the First World War, lead to such an idea. See *Istoriya Azerbaidzhana po dokumentam i publikatsiyam* (Baku: Elm, 1990), pp. 87–93.

60. For the history of Karabakh irredentism after 1920, see Henry R. Guttenbach, *Vopros o Nagornom Karabakhe* (Nationality papers) (Russian edition) (1991), pp. 99–109.

61. Some pamphlets of that time were striking evidence of this, and in 1990 they were reprinted by the Baku publisher Elm: I. G. Chavchavadze, *Armianskie uchenye i vopiyuschiye kamni* (Tiflis: Tipografia Gruzinskogo Izdatelskogo tovarischestva, 1902); N. N. Shavrov, *Novaya ugroza russkomu delu v Zakavkazie: predstoyashchaya rasprodazha Mugani inorodtsam* (St. Petersburg, Izdaniye Russkogo sobraniya, 1911).

62. Chinghiz Guseinov, one of the few writers who understands the opposite side, writes: "The theme of deceptions-slaughter-weeping, has during the past decades become dominant in society. . . . A global mononational idea, directed against the Turks, has gradually and spontaneously turned its spear against the Azerbaijanians." *Literaturnaya gazeta*, September 16, 1992, p. 11.

63. Scientific arguments in favor of different details of this myth are often to be found even in the works of those of the contemporary Azerbaijan scholars who have not become regular defenders of national righteousness, like their head, academician Ziya Buniyatov. See, for example, A. S. Sumbatzade, *Adzerbaijantsy—etnogenez i formirovaniye naroda* (Baku: Elm, 1990), pp. 194–277.

64. Compare the information contained in a report on the Khodjalin events compiled by the human rights center Memorial and A. D. Sakhakrov's 1988 unposted letter on the Sumgait events to M. S. Gorbachev. *Nezavisimaya gazeta*, June 18, October 27, 1992.

65. *Express-khronika*, no. 30 (260) (1992), pp. 2, 8; no. 43 (273), p. 4; no. 50 (280), p. 1.

66. See, for example, Lurie and Studenikin, op. cit., p. 14.

67. The pasture and agricultural economy of the Turkmen (on this, see N. K. Yaroshevich, "*Organizatsia krestyanskogo khozyaistva Srednei Azii. Populiarni ocherk* [Tashkent, 1926], pp. 77–82), on the one hand, involved them in the system of land relations in the territory of the Khiva Khanate, and, on the other, gave them the opportunity to escape the control of the Khan's government.

68. Before the Russian conquest, the Turkmen could manoeuvre politically between Khiva, Bukhara, and Tehran, which helped them to retain their independence.

69. Quotation from V. V. Bartold, "Ocherk istorii turkmenskogo naroda" in Akademik V. V. Bartold, *Sochineniya*, Tom II, chast 1 (Moscow: Izdatelstvo vostochnoi literatury, 1963), p. 607.

70. V. I. Kozlov, *Natsionalnosti SSSR: etnodemograficheskii obzor* (Moscow: Statistika, 1975), pp. 211–212.

71. See correspondence by Igor Rotar of Samarkand, *Nezavisimaya gazeta*, December 27, 1992.

72. See, for example, K. P. Kalinovskaya. "Mezhetnicheskaya situatsiya v Vostochnom Kazakhstane (po polevym materialam 1986–1989 godov)," in *Etnicheskiye konflikty v SSSR*, pp. 15–26.

73. *Express-Khronika* no. 43 (273) (1992): 2.

74. Information I received in a conversation with a Russian scholar permanently residing in Alma-Ata.

75. According to the preliminary data of a poll held by the Political Research Centre at the Orien-Fond National Scientific Foundation (Dushanbe), even in August–October 1992 56 percent of the respondents believed that the Tajiks themselves were responsible for the split threatening the Tajik state. The data were given to me by the head of the center, Muzaffar Olimov.

IV

Islam and Politics in the Southern Zone of the Former USSR

ALEXEI V. MALASHENKO

An analysis of the conflict potential of the Central Asian and Transcaucasian republics of the former USSR cannot be complete without due account of the religious, primarily Islamic, factor, which acquires increasing weight in the life of the Muslim republics themselves and of the entire Central Asian and Caucasian-Transcaucasian regions. Since the end of 1980, Islam has become an important political factor in the Muslim regions of the USSR.

ISLAM UNDER SOVIET COMMUNIST REGIME

For many politicians and researchers, the spread of the Islamic renaissance to this region came as a surprise because they regarded Central Asia, the Transcaucasia, and the Northern Caucasus primarily as components of the Soviet Union, as if forgetting that the former "Soviet Muslims" belong to the world of Islam. Such a stand rested on sufficiently weighty grounds. The Soviet totalitarian system had separated the CAR and the CTR, to say nothing of the Muslims in Russia itself, from their coreligionists abroad. The notion of "foreign Islam" even became widespread in Soviet science. As distinct from "Soviet Islam," it was recognized that "foreign Islam" was politicized and unable to influence the sociopolitical system. Furthermore, an illusion was prevalent, inside and outside the USSR, that since 1917, society in the Muslim regions of the Soviet Union had changed to such an extent that Islam was no longer important. Last but not least, the assessment of the role and place of Islam was heavily influenced by the stereotype of Soviet official propaganda, which claimed that in the USSR, Islam was merely a survival of feudalism and that its disappearance was only a question of time.

Despite all the attempts of the Soviet administration to suppress Muslims by transforming the traditional Muslim society after the Soviet pattern, this society managed to preserve its features and, most important, the behavioral norms sanctioned by Islam.

The traditional links, which were of a paternalistic character, were not destroyed in the course of the socialist changes in the Muslim regions of the USSR. They acquired a new color but did not radically change, largely because some important Islamic norms are close to the communist tenets, specifically, collectivist (communal) values over individualistic ones, the importance of social justice, and the preference for authoritarian power.

Some Russian scientists note the "consonance" of communism and Islam within the USSR. For instance, Sergei Polyakov, an ethnographer from Moscow University, has advanced a convincing argument of how the Soviet political and economic institutions merged with the traditional ones, creating odd structures that looked paradoxical. Waqf lands remained intact in such structures and were included in the system of collective-farm land-ownership, and the influence of the *mahalla* council (town block community) was ensured—sometimes it operated under the aegis of an official elected body, a "Soviet of People's Deputies." Besides that, each *mahalla* had "unofficial" clergy of its own.¹

The society that emerged in the Soviet East remained a traditional Muslim one. That is why Islam's penetration into social and political life at the end of the 1980s was natural, just as natural is its presence in the home and foreign policy of the Muslim countries. This also applies to the appeal of the political establishment to Islam, which is well known from the example of the states of the Middle and Near East, and the specific role played by the mosque and Muslim clergy in their political life. Illustrative of this are also the purely Muslim political movements, above all, of the fundamentalist character, which operate in almost all Muslim countries.

Islam's political presence in the post-Soviet era is evident at the level of official policy, opposition, and the Muslim clergy.

There is much in common in the attitude toward Islam of the USSR's communist authorities before August 1991 and of the postcommunist governments of the CIS member countries. At least two tendencies in the authorities' policy are invariable: (1) a striving to limit, if not to halt altogether, the growth of the influence of Islam in sociopolitical life; (2) an intent to establish control, or "to intercept," the Islamic revival movement, to benefit by it as much as possible.

On the one hand, the current generation of the Russian Federation were known not long ago as orthodox communists, which could guarantee their irreconcilability to Islam. On the other hand, they belong to traditional society, and their world outlook is inevitably shaped by traditional notions based on the Muslim religion. Many cases are known when the communists, who had retired from their official posts, stated in public that they had

always been faithful Muslims in their hearts and had performed religious rites.

After the beginning of *perestroika* such people (who probably formed the majority of the ruling elite) started talking openly about the immense significance of religion for society in their lands, making no secret of their liking for Islam as both tradition and as a dogma. This attitude to religion began to manifest itself in the speeches of the first secretaries of the Central Asian communist parties and in their participation in the folk (in essence, religious) holidays and celebrations, as well as in the cessation of atheist propaganda. Illustrative in this respect is the draft of the Programme of Action of the Communist Party of Uzbekistan, worked out in late 1990: "Upholding the scientific-materialistic world outlook, the Party is dissociating itself from the past voluntaristic actions in regard to religion. . . . It is open for cooperation with religious organisations in promoting universal human values, and come out for their participation in socio-political and cultural life."² In 1989 and 1990, the republics of Central Asia, Transcaucasia and Russia itself were allowed the celebration of religious holidays, which were declared to be days off. With administration consent, special rooms at enterprises and institutions were set aside for praying.

The restoration of mosques and the construction of new ones started with the permission of the authorities or with their direct participation. In Uzbekistan alone, an estimated 3,000 mosques were restored or built by January 1, 1992. In Tajikistan 130 cathedral (main city) mosques operated in 1992.³ Over 2,000 mosques were officially registered in the republic at the end of 1992.⁴ According to estimates by the local administration, up to 500 mosques work in comparatively sparsely populated Turkmenistan; several years ago, there were no operating mosques in the Turkmen capital of Ashgabat. In Daghestan, the largest North Caucasian republic, the number of mosques reached 600 in 1991 (compared with 27 in 1988).⁵ The number of mosques is growing in Northern Caucasus, especially in the Chechen Republic and the Karachai area, as well as in the Muslim-populated Volga area of Russia. Within a short time, the authorities turned over to believers all mosques that are historical and architectural landmarks. Their list includes Tochta Boi mosque and the Guboz cathedral mosque in the city of Namangan. The Tochta Boi mosque is situated in the center of the city of Tashkent with its 2 million population. During Friday prayers, the number of worshippers is so large that militia have to direct motor traffic.⁶

It is impossible to calculate accurately the number of the mosques in operation. In Central Asia, there is a legally existing mosque on every block, plus district, urban, and cathedral mosques. And in the Caucasus, every large village has a mosque.

Many mosques have schools attended by children born in the 1980s. The Tajik Islamic Institute, named after Imam Al-Tirmizi, was built in Dushanbe for 150 students. The construction was supervised by a religious figure,

Imam Khatyb Usmon Rakhimdzhonov.⁷ The Imam al-Bukhari Islamic Institute has been established in Tashkent. The Islamic Institute for training some 100 future clergymen and theologians has been functioning in Baku since 1991. Similar educational establishments are being created in the Chechen Republic and Daghestan.

In Central Asia religious education has ceased to be a privilege of men. Women's Islamic courses have opened at some *madrasahs*. The women's courses at the Bugmur-Kazakh *madrasah* of Kashka-Darya district in Uzbekistan have won particular respect. The popularity of these courses is so great that the teachers of the *madrasah* have opened branches of the courses in neighboring towns and villages. Special courses with a student body of up to 400 girls have opened at the Imam Al-Bukhari Islamic Institute in Tashkent.

Furthermore, the question of introducing religious education at state-run secondary schools is being raised in some republics. In Turkmenistan, a decree was signed by President Saparmurad Niyazov in autumn 1992.

At the same time, up to the failure of the August 1991 communist coup in Moscow, the Soviet administration in Central Asia and (to a lesser extent) in Northern Caucasus periodically returned to the question of atheist propaganda. For instance, in June 1991, the leaders of Andizhan, Bukhara, Kashka-Darya, Namangan, Samarkand, and other regions were criticized at a session of the Ideological Commission of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Uzbekistan for slackening atheist propaganda. The meeting particularly stressed the danger of growing religious sentiments among young people, as well as of the spread of the system of religious education. Secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party K. G. Yusupov was indignant that "schoolchildren are taught religion at home by self-imposed teachers who have no right to do this. Students express sympathy and solidarity with believers."⁸

At the 21st Congress of the Communist Party of Tajikistan in 1990, First Secretary of its Central Committee Kakhar Makhamov lamented the growing activity of clergy. He expressed concern about the increase in the number of religious institutions and the expansion of publishing and missionary activities and complained that ideological work was neglected.⁹ However, statements of this sort were pro forma and were not followed by anti-Islamic measures.

ISLAM IN THE POST-SOVIET PERIOD: SUCCESSION AND CHANGES

On becoming presidents of the independent Muslim states that emerged after the breakup of the USSR, the first secretaries of the local communist parties swore an oath to their peoples on both the Koran and the local constitution. They felt that there was no contradiction between the Koran

and their subservience to the communist regime. (Among the top-ranking party leaders, only Kakhar Makhkamov had the courage to admit in public that he was a nonbeliever. On that day, the head of the Tajik clergy announced that after his death, the apostate would not be buried in accordance with Muslim custom. Makhkamov's statement accelerated his resignation and removal from politics.)

Emphasizing their fidelity to the renaissance of Islam and restoration of the norms and traditions related to it, high officials in the CIS countries of the Muslim zone resolutely opposed Islam's interference into politics. In the majority of Muslim states, the ruling establishment refuses to recognize religious movements and opposes their involvement in politics. This may be vividly witnessed in the countries where radical fundamentalists stand in opposition to the government—for example, the military coup in Algeria in 1992 prompted by the state's fear of the success scored by the fundamentalist Islamic Salvation Front at the elections. Such an "antifundamentalist coup" is not the only example of measures taken by politicians to offset the growth of their fundamentalist competitors' influence. The governments of Egypt, Syria, Tunisia, and Turkey have been actively combating Islamic movements.

The leaders in Central Asia and Transcaucasia regard fundamentalists as potentially dangerous competitors in the struggle for power. This is quite understandable because after the collapse of communism, due to the lack of democratic traditions in society and the inevitable deterioration of living standards for most people, the ideology of fundamentalism, which upholds the ideas of the Islamic state and "Islamic economy" based on the principles of social justice, becomes especially attractive to the masses. An organized fundamentalist movement thus objectively can turn into an influential social force.

The leaders of the former Soviet republics of Central Asia and Transcaucasia favor a secular state system. Readily accepting help from traditionalist regimes of Saudi Arabia and Kuwait, as well as fundamentalist Pakistan and Iran, the Muslims of Central Asia, the Caucasus, and Russia give preference to the Turkish model of development, which strictly limits the place of Islam in social and political life.

The president of Uzbekistan, Islam Karimov; president of Kazakhstan, Nursultan Nazarbayev; president of Turkmenistan, Saparmurad Niyazov; former president of Azerbaijan Abulfaz Elchibei and its actual president Gueidar Aliev; and the young Kirgiz technocrat, President Askar Akayev, spoke in favor of a secular state. The former president of Tajikistan, Rahmon Nabyev, and the new leadership of the republic also supported a secular model. This stand was confirmed in the official state documents, including their constitutions.

In this connection Saparmurad Niyazov said "Islam does not have [in the development of the state] any advantages compared to other religions. We have firmly proclaimed and confirmed in the Constitution that Turkmenistan

is a secular state.”¹⁰ This view was shared by the former president of Azerbaijan, Ayaz Mütalibov (before Elchibey), who stressed on several occasions that “we have been building and will continue to build a secular state.”¹¹ The president of Azerbaijan, Abulfaz Elchibey, elected in 1992, is also a champion of secular convictions. He believes that “human rights are above class, religious and national interests” and advocates a secular state as well.¹² Elchibey’s pronouncements caused Iranian fundamentalists to brand him a hypocrite and apostate.

Djohar Dudayev, the leader of the Chechen Republic, not recognized by Russia, shares the same views. He wants his republic to be “a constitutional secular state.”¹³ At the same time he has repeatedly threatened his political opponents with a holy war, *jihad*. Besides, he believes it is possible to partially use *shariat* in the legislation and allows the Muslim Brothers to conduct their activities on the territory under his control.

The choice made by the “young” Muslim states of the former USSR in favor of a purely secular model was supported by Russia, the European states, and the United States. The years 1991 and 1992 saw numerous visits to Central Asia and Transcaucasia by U.S. and European politicians, including U.S. Secretary of State James Baker. One of the main aims of such visits was to find out the degree of commitment to the secularist choice by the post-Soviet ruling elite and the extent to which it could be influenced by Islamic political forces.

The secular politicians were fully supported by Muslim clergy, who also came out against Islam’s involvement in politics.

At the outset of Gorbachev’s *perestroika*, the USSR had four Muslim religious boards, all fully controlled by the official authorities: the Religious Board of Muslims of the European Part of Russia and Siberia (DUMES), the Religious Board of Transcaucasian Muslims (DUMZAK), the Religious Board of Muslims of the Northern Caucasus (DUMSK), and the Religious Board of Muslims of Central Asia (SADUM). Being fully incorporated into the Soviet political setup, the Muslim institutional clergy wholeheartedly supported the official political course, content with the role of interpreter.

Initially, general changes in the country did not shake the positions of the clergy, who continued to support the official course. Moreover, during the first three years of *perestroika*, no significant changes took place in the top echelons of the clergy. Only in 1989, after a reshuffling of the top echelons of power in Uzbekistan and under pressure from the religious opposition, the head of SADUM, Mufti Shamsutdin Khan Ishan Babakhan, the key figure in the Muslim clergy of the Soviet Union, was ousted. In the same year, the elderly Mahmud Gekkiyev, head of DUMSK, was also deposed. Both were accused of excessive pliability to the secular administration, corruption, incapability or unwillingness to defend the interests of believers, and lack of attention to religious education. Among the long list of their sins, breaches of religious ethics were noted separately.

Their successors—Mufti Mukhammad-Sadyk Muhammad-Yusuf in Uzbekistan and Bahautdin Isayev in Northern Caucasus—also supported the administration, which stopped opposing Islam.

The beginning of the change of the leadership of the religious boards was a prologue to the establishment of independent national religious structures. During the two subsequent years, independent *muftiyats* and *qaziyats* were established in Kazakhstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, and Northern Caucasus. Finally, in the autumn of 1992, the Religious Board of Muslims of the European Part of Russia and Siberia was on the verge of collapse. Its chairman, Talgat Tadzhetdin, was presented with a list of accusations, which included, among other sins, authoritarian methods of administration, as well as “blasphemy and contempt of Islam.”¹⁴

In Russia, the Muslim clergy became split by the efforts of the group of young *imams* headed by Mukaddas Bibarsov, *imam-khatyb* of Saratov’s cathedral mosque. This group is seeking to gain maximum independence of the mosque from the *muftiyat*. In October 1992, it established the Coordination Centre of the Muslim Religious Boards, independent of the DUMES.

The establishment of national religious institutions in Central Asia and Northern Caucasus has not led to any major changes in the behavior of top-ranking clergy, who invariably supported the secular administration in the majority of the newly formed Muslim states. The clergy, who closely cooperate with the administration, believe that this kind of power, irrespective of its communist past, can return to the true faith. Muhammad-Sadyk Muhammad-Yusuf is frank on this issue. Answering a question put by Russian journalist Igor Rotar—“Can a man who worked for many years as the first secretary of the Central Committee [of the Communist Party], a staunch atheist, become a faithful Muslim?”—the Uzbek mufti answered, “We think, yes. Both Karimov and rank-and-file Communists know nothing about Islam. Our duty is to give them access to this faith.”¹⁵ By making such a statement, the head of the Muslim clergy both relieves the Uzbek president of the responsibility for his communist activities and asserts his own significance, for he virtually claims for himself and his colleagues the role of “the pastor of stray communist souls.”

Among all the states of Central Asia, Tajikistan is the only republic in which the secular state and the top clergy have failed to reach a consensus. There are several underlying reasons: the strong position of the radical Islamic movement; the unwillingness of the former president to make certain concessions to the clergy; and the strong personality of the head of the local Muslims, *qazicolon* Akbar Turadzhon-zoda, who until recently sought to establish himself as the Tajik national leader, although he made no public statements to this effect. The confrontation between the *qazicolon* and the president was one of the causes of the political conflict, which has led to bloodshed.

There is a growing desire by the clergy to be independent of the authorities, to break up the traditional dependence of Muslim religious pastors on the secular administration and high-ranking clergy subordinate to it. Moreover, they are supported by the lower echelons of the clergy.

ISLAMIC MOVEMENTS: FROM ENLIGHTENMENT TO POLITICS

The Islamic political movement represents another important aspect of this region. It is becoming a major force capable of influencing society.

The Islamic movement as an organized political force did not exist in the USSR prior to *perestroika*. Only in Tajikistan and Uzbekistan were there groups of "Islamic opposition" whose members protested the persecution of Islam and expressed solidarity with those sharing the same faith, for instance, in Afghanistan. Certainly, the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan in 1979 fostered Islamic opposition activities. This is particularly true of the Uzbek dissident imam Rahmatullah and the so-called Wahhabites in the south of Tajikistan. However, supporters of both Rahmatullah and Wahhabites can be placed among Islamic educators rather than fundamentalists. The Islamic revolution in Iran did not produce the expected effect on the Soviet Muslims. There was no express sympathy toward it in Central Asia or Azerbaijan.

Muslim brotherhoods nevertheless have exerted influence on social life in Central Asia and the Caucasus. Muslim brotherhoods (*tarikats* in Northern Caucasus) have always been a force in the Muslim East. Nakshbandiya, the most influential of these brotherhoods, was formed in the fourteenth century and remained influential throughout the subsequent history of the Muslim countries of Central Asia and Northern Caucasus. The place of a Muslim in the hierarchy of a brotherhood determines his social status, professional promotion, and so forth.¹⁶ However, even such an influential brotherhood as Nakshbandiya was not a political movement and did not interfere in Soviet government.

The appearance of an Islamic political movement proper dates back to early 1990. Previously, the Islamic renaissance in the USSR confined itself to enlightenment activities, in which the Soviet government also took part.

An "iron curtain" established by the communist authorities isolated Soviet Muslims from their coreligionists in the Near and Middle East. Partially due to this fact, the processes of Islamic enlightenment and modernization of Islam came to a halt in the USSR. After the end of the 1980s, Soviet Muslims started making up for lost time. Koranic clubs and schools and special Islamic courses were organized and run not by clergy but by laypeople versed in Koran teachings. Among the most venerated authors, one could not find names of the great Muslim reformers like Muhammad Abdoh or Djamal ad-Din al-Afghani. Works by Islamic fundamentalists Khasan al-

Bannah, Sayyid Kutb, Yusuf al-Kardawi, and Imam Khomeini aroused the most interest. Their books were translated and widely read.

From 1988 to 1990 the movement of enlightenment and reforms in Central Asia and the Muslim regions of Russia invoked the ideas of Jadidism, which were widespread at the turn of the century and represented a local form of Islamic cultural and historical heritage. By professing Jadidism, Muslim intellectuals sought to synthesize Islam and modern views. Jadidism was suppressed by the Bolsheviks, and Jadids were subjected to repressions during 1920–1930.

The period of enlightenment set the stage for the politicization of Islam and the creation of political parties and structures. That Islam would appear in politics is only natural. Islam, unlike other religions, is immersed in settling secular—social, economic, and political—problems. Islam as part of politics constitutes a natural part of Muslim society, without which it is “incomplete.”

American, European, and Russian political scientists equate the Islamic political movement with fundamentalism. They also emphasize its aggressive and expansionist nature and its incompatibility with democratic principles. “Threat of fundamentalism” is a permanent theme in the works of Western political scientists. They forget that fundamentalist ideology is based on a desire of Muslims to find their own way of development, quite apart from Euro-Christians, designed to help preserve and recreate the lost features of Muslim civilization. Understandably, it is not a question of peculiar “Muslim methods” of tilling or trading or “special Muslim techniques.” Muslims have a code that regulates relations between people, principles of state structure, and specific features of political life.

No one should ignore the potential of Islam to make itself felt positively in the future. “The Islamic crucible,” believes the French political scientist François Burgast who specializes in Islam, “can produce conditions for socio-political balance.”¹⁷ It is wrong to equate fundamentalism and Islamic extremism, all the more so since fundamentalists have split into two wings: radical and moderate. For example, Islamists represented in the parliaments of Jordan and Kuwait can hardly be placed among radicals, let alone extremists.

Fundamentalism emerged in the USSR in the early 1990s. At that time, the Islamic enlightenment was gradually acquiring a political character, and there were opportunities for opposing formations, such as the Wahhabite groups in Tajikistan and supporters of Imam Rahmatullah in Uzbekistan. At that time, foreign fundamentalism strengthened its position in the Muslim regions of the USSR: contacts were being established with respective centers in Iran, Pakistan, Afghanistan, and Arab countries; hundreds of missionaries drawn from the ranks of religious activists, commercial agents, journalists, and students in these countries appeared in Central Asia, Transcaucasia, the Caucasus, and Russia.

Social and economic conditions gave a considerable impetus to the promotion of fundamentalism in the Muslim regions of the former USSR, notably Central Asia. Changes in the economy caused living standards to fall, leading to discontent with the new policies pursued by the central government in Moscow. Many Muslims started seeing that the way to save themselves was not in a return to communism or a turn to democracy but in the restoration of Shariat.

FIRST ISLAMIC PARTIES

The first Islamic party to emerge in the USSR was the Islamic Revival party (IRP). Its constituent congress was held in Astrakhan in June 1990. The backbone of the party was made of Tatars (mainly from Moscow) and Avars, the major ethnic group in Daghestan. The congress was attended by Tatars from Kazan, representatives of the Central Asian peoples, and Kazakhs.¹⁸

The IRP had only several hundred members, mainly Daghestanians and Moscovites, and its influence has remained weak. The party's leaders, Valiahmed Sadur, is sympathetic to the ideals of Islamic renaissance. At the same time, IRP leaders emphasized their obedience to party regulations and strongly denied any form of extremism. They believe that fundamentalism is based on the desire of Muslims to create, through legal political struggle, conditions that will enable them to lead a life fully corresponding to the requirements of Islam. In the IRP's opinion, the essence of Islamic fundamentalism is "in return to the fundamentals of Islam free of innovations and modernisation." "Fundamentalist," writes Rashid Khatuyev in the IRP newspaper *Al-Wahdat* "is not a fanatic or reactionary. He speaks up for the principles that were laid and followed by the Prophet be revived and purged of all the innovations promoted by immediate interests of the rulers."¹⁹

The IRP defines itself as a "religious and political organisation, which brings together the Muslims who are actively propagating Islam, follow its prescriptions and participate in religious, cultural, social, political and economic activities based on the IRP principles." The party's program stipulates that "the far-fetched schemes of social development have led humanity to a total crisis in every sphere of life. Saving is in following the way of Allah."²⁰ These statements are typical of Muslim fundamentalists.

Since its inception, the IRP has tried to spread its influence to all the Muslim regions of the Soviet Union—mainly Central Asia. Its efforts resulted in regional party conferences in Tajikistan (October 1990) and Uzbekistan (January 1991). They established regional party branches in these two republics, the most significant in terms of the Islamic perspective.

But from its beginning in Central Asia, the party was persecuted by local

officials. Its Tashkent regional conference was dispersed several hours after its start. In Tajikistan, the conferees gathered underground and used conspirators' methods to put off the KGB.

Largely due to this persecution, Islamic revivalists became popular in both republics. We have every ground to assume that Soviet Central Asian Muslims accounted for the majority of party membership by the winter of 1990–1991. Although no membership data were available at the time (and none are now), we can make a tentative estimation. It appears that the party united over 30,000, though a prominent activist spoke about 100,000 in private conversation in summer 1991.

The IRP failed to establish branches in the two other republics of Soviet Central Asia, Turkmenistan and Kyrgyzstan. Islam had not risen above the everyday level in these republics and had never emerged on the political stage, so conditions were not conducive to its rise. Besides, in Turkmenistan, the authorities isolated its supporters and deprived them of any chance to hold a conference.

Another political league emerged at about the same time, also with an ideology tinged by fundamentalism: the Islamic party of Turkestan, which aspired to act on behalf of all Turkic nations in the USSR. Appeals to fundamentalist ideals were part and parcel of its political and ideological line. The appearance of this party did not make any noticeable change in the political balance of forces. It remained inconspicuous among political parties of Central Asia and Transcaucasia, and it failed to offer a clear-cut program—with the exception of several public appeals that, for the most part, passed unnoticed. The Islamic party of Turkestan remained an intellectual circle that entertained dreams of reviving Turkic ideas. This party disappeared as quietly as it had emerged.

In Kazakhstan, whose Islamic revivalists had no notable success, fundamentalists are represented by the Alash party of National Freedom. Unlike classical fundamentalists, Alashists favor a synthesis of Islamic and Turkic ideas. Party president Aron Atabek translates its name as Red Wolf (symbol of the Turkic peoples) or the Victor.²¹ Alash was established in 1990 to unite several dozen young people—mainly college students, civil officers, and engineers. Atabek gives their average age as 22 to 24. The party has branches in Alma-Ata (the Kazakh capital) and several towns in the south of the republic. The total membership approached 3,000 in spring 1992.

Alash ideology is based on the Islam-Turkism-democracy triad. The party opposes the communist system and wants the Kazakh state to develop along market economy lines. Alashists see "Turkism [as] an absolute genetic factor uniting the Turkic peoples; the basis of the language, mentality, ethnic psychology and ethnic culture of the Turks."²² Their small number is compensated for by their political activity. Big and small rallies are held in many towns throughout Kazakhstan. Alash takes pride in the fact that its con-

ferences attract not only Kazakhs but ethnic Russians, Ukrainians, and Germans who side with Red Wolves' demands for democratization of social and political life and removal of the former from power.

As Alash activities grew (in particular, taking the form of a campaign against Ratbek Nysynbayev, the mufti of Kazakhstan), the authorities had several leaders detained and started persecuting the party. The republican leadership declared Alash unconstitutional, and criminal proceedings were started against several party members. Atabek had to move to Moscow, from where he appealed to the president of Azerbaijan for asylum. After the leader left, the party activity declined.

Initial signs of cooperation between Alash and the IRP appeared in 1991 and early 1992, but nothing of note developed, largely because the persecution of Alash made it increasingly difficult to maintain contacts with it.

After the breakup of the USSR, regional branches of the IRP in Tajikistan and Uzbekistan consolidated into independent national fundamentalist parties. This did not happen in Turkmenistan and Kyrgyzstan. As to Azerbaijan, which has as many as six parties and organizations calling themselves Islamic, the political influence of Islam there has proved much weaker than some experts have expected. Azerbaijan has not become a hotbed of Islamic fundamentalism in the former USSR.

On the whole, nationalist tendencies prevail in Central Asia, the Caucasus, and Muslim-populated parts of Russia. The idea of establishing a nation-state has gained more support among the majority of the population and particularly among intelligentsia than fundamentalists' calls for adopting an Islamic model. Besides, in post-Soviet society, Islamic fundamentalism and nationalism tend to stimulate and complement each other.

References to Islam are contained in the programs of most nationalistic parties and organizations, such as Birlik in Uzbekistan, Rastokhez in Tajikistan, Azat in Kazakhstan, and Asaba in Kyrgyzstan. For instance, the influential Tatar Public Centre devoted an entire part of its program to Islam. It reads in part that the Muslim religion is "one of the pillars of national culture and moral health."²³ The programs of other nationalist organizations also acknowledge the great cultural, moral, and spiritual importance of Islam but disapprove of political activities under its banners.

MODERATE AND RADICAL TRENDS

Two trends have taken shape within Islamic fundamentalism on the former Soviet territory. The first comprises Islamic political parties like the IRP that strive to find their place in the new political arena and act as an officially recognized political opposition. They include the IRP of Uzbekistan, the IRP of Tajikistan,²⁴ Alash of Kazakhstan, and small Azeri parties (Azerbaijan Islam Partiiasy and Azerbaijan Islam Tarakki Partiiasy). These parties, many of which are still formally banned, are quite law abiding. Their

leaders have repeatedly voiced readiness for a dialogue with the authorities and have avoided any actions that could elicit accusations of extremism. They are a moderate wing of the fundamentalist movement.

At the same time, radicalism is growing within these parties, fueled mostly by young members. Radicals are most influential in the IRP of Tajikistan and the IRP of Uzbekistan. A degree of radicalism was also characteristic of Kazakhstan's Alash, whose leader, Aron Atabek, tried to combine Islamic fundamentalism with the idea of Turkic unity. But in mid-1992 Alash took a more moderate stand, and Aron Atabek found it possible, and even necessary, to combine Islamic fundamentalism with European norms of democracy.²⁵

The second radical trend in Islamic fundamentalism in 1991–1992 was represented not by Islamic parties but by organizations whose structure and activities were reminiscent of the notorious Muslim Brothers. The most prominent of them were Namangan-based Adolat (Justice), which operated in and around the Fergana Valley in Uzbekistan; Muslim Brothers in Chechnya; an Azerbaijani organization called Towbe (the title of one of the *surahs* of Koran was Towbe, which means "repentance"), and a number of smaller groups in the Northern Caucasus (like Jamaat al-Muslimin operating in Daghestan).

Among the Muslim radicals are many young people trying to create paramilitary formations with a view to maintaining public order and combating corruption and social injustice. In the young fundamentalists' view, the exorbitant prices at the urban markets are a characteristic feature of social injustice. To bring prices down, urban youth often directly pressure (including the threat of physical harassment) market traders, which sometimes leads to trade blocs, as occurred in Dushanbe, Namangan, Makhachkala, and some other smaller cities. (Although such actions are taken under Islamic slogans, they are frequently organized by local mafia, who have nothing to do with Islam.)

Many members of such organizations are determined to enforce Islamic morality. They protest against clothes, photography, and films that do not correspond to Muslim canons. Here they are basically at one with the authorities of the Muslim states of Central Asia and the Caucasian Republics, which in 1992 took measures against pornography.

Adolat, Towbe, and other organizations of this kind have been collaborating with the Muslim clergy, primarily with its younger members, who allow the use of mosques for their meetings. It is noteworthy that both Adolat and Towbe emerged as nonreligious organizations, while the Islamic spirit was imparted to them mainly by Muslim preachers. (In 1990–1991 Towbe supported Saddam Hussein, and its leader promised to provide 100,000 fighters to assist him.)

Having assumed the duties of guards of Islam, Adolat activists began to act like a political organization. In December 1991, they participated in

mass actions of the Namangan inhabitants who demanded that Islam Karimov establish a public center for studying the Koran in the building of the former regional committee of the Communist (now People's Democratic) party of Uzbekistan. Next, they supported residents of Namangan Region in protesting the appointment of an outsider to the post of the leader of the region.

The ruling elite was forced to reckon with the young, radical fundamentalists in February 1992, when Islam Karimov tried to establish relations with Adolat. Beginning in the summer of 1992, the Azerbaijan leaders were watching Towbe's activities. In the Chechen Republic, the "Muslim brothers" supported by local President Djohar Dudayev. At least six detachments, whose members undergo combat training from instructors from Afghanistan, Pakistan, and Libya, operate in the Chechen Republic. The Chechen "Muslim brothers" passed death sentences on the leaders of the Russian Federation and declared a holy war against them.²⁶ In a sense, the young fundamentalists act in opposition to the moderate Islamic parties, which are not inclined to take antigovernment action.

The most powerful blow was dealt at the "young" in 1992 after the collapse of the talks between Islam Karimov and the Uzbek opposition. Some twenty members of Adolat were jailed, and many were sentenced.

The abortive talks between Islam Karimov and the opposition, including Islamic, testified to the recognition of the fundamentalists as a political force. In winter 1992, the Uzbek president managed to create a "pocket opposition" in the country in the shape of the moderately oppositional Erk party, whose leader, Muhammad Salih, even put up formal opposition to Islam Karimov at the 1992 presidential elections. But Karimov failed to reach agreement with the fundamentalists in the same manner.

Some experts claim that arrests among the fundamentalists are linked also with the discovery of huge reserves of oil in the Fergana Valley. Seeking to attract foreign, above all American, capital to the region, Karimov did his best to prove his ability to control the situation, as well as to show his nonacceptance of fundamentalism, to prospective creditors.

There is ample reason to speak about the relatively rapid affirmation of fundamentalism as an independent force in society and politics.

THE TAJIK TRAGEDY AND ITS CONSEQUENCES FOR ISLAMIC MOVEMENTS

Beginning in autumn 1991, Tajikistan's IRP began to fight for power. In May 1992 the party entered a coalition government, in which Dawlat Usmon was named prime minister and his colleagues obtained several ministerial posts. Soon afterward a rivalry for political power arose, and in August it developed into a civil war, with fundamentalists played a leading role. The allies of the IRP were secular nationalistic forces, such as the Democratic

party of Tajikistan and the Rastokhe movement. Its opponents were postcommunist political structures. Simultaneously, ethnic and interclan contradictions became important. Indeed, the confrontation between ex-communists and their opponents is a struggle between the traditional forces of the north and the south: the mountainous Pamirs and flatland central Tajikistan.

The conflict in Tajikistan merits special study, especially because the fundamentalists have failed to bring about ethnic reconciliation. Several reasons explain the failure. First, most of the population, above all city dwellers, fear the prospect of restoring the Shari'a legislation and religious fanaticism. Second, the IRP and its leaders lack political experience. Third, the political coalition is bifurcated. And fourth, in Tajik society, regional interests are more important than religious, political, and national unity.

The future of the situation in Tajikistan remains uncertain. The balance of clan and political forces that was broken in the spring of 1992 has never been restored. The IRP and its coalition allies have condemned "the communist structures" for the civil war that has broken out, with no understanding of other causes. The government formed in November 1992 set a goal of eliminating Islamists in the republic, but in practice this appeared to be a continuation of the same interclan struggle.

Here we are interested not so much in the outcome of the events in Tajikistan proper as in their impact on the neighboring Muslim states of the CIS, and above all on the fundamentalist movement in Central Asia and elsewhere in the Muslim regions of the former USSR. Clearly, the civil war in Tajikistan has dealt a grave blow to the Islamic political movement. It has demonstrated the limited character of the fundamentalist influence and given to the presidents of the Central Asian republics the opportunity to accuse fundamentalists of political inconsistency and even criminal acts. The bloodshed in Tajik cities was attributed to Muslim fundamentalists, above all, Tajikistan's IRP, while ignoring the participation of other political groups. It is no coincidence that steps to ban Islamic parties and groupings in Uzbekistan coincided with the peak of Tajik events.

The Tajik conflict has had a negative impact on the prestige of fundamentalists throughout Central Asia. They are blamed for the bloodshed in Tajikistan, and many Tajiks fear them. They prefer to flee their homeland and wait for the civil war to end. "They will force me to wear a *paranja* [veil] and make somebody's third wife of me," said a member of the staff of the Tajik Academy of Sciences who fled Dushanbe in the summer of 1992. In connection with this statement, it is worth noting that as early as the autumn of 1991 in some Tajik cities, a number of demonstrations of women took place, opposing the registration of the IRP on the ground that IRP activists would insist on limiting women's rights.

Paradoxically, it is Tajikistan, where the influence of Islamic fundamentalism is the strongest, that has demonstrated the limited opportunities of

fundamentalism. Indeed, the bloody clashes have turned out to be a containing factor for the growth of fundamentalism. Nevertheless, the fundamentalist movement is not in danger of collapse. The idea of an Islamic alternative, an Islamic state, to say nothing of the Shari'a legislation, remains attractive to a large number of Muslims. Disillusionment with communism, the unacceptability of European democratic norms, and poor living standards force Muslims to look for a way of life based on the norms of Islamic social justice.

As crime has escalated, the ideas of partial introduction of the Shari'a are winning popularity. It is interesting to note that the threat of applying Muslim legislation to criminals has sharply cut down the rate of offenses in Namangan. In this respect, a public opinion poll held in Uzbekistan in 1991 indicated the public mood: 88 percent of those polled favored the enforcement of shari'a norms.²⁷ The application of some of these norms is approved even by moderates.

Throughout Muslim society, there is a hope that a return to Islam can solve many complex problems, including in the sphere of morality. There is also a belief that Islam can prevent rapid polarization between the haves and have-nots. Paragraph 26 of the IRP program stresses that the party stands "for regulating, on the basis of the Shari'a overaccumulation of wealth in the hands of some people."²⁸ The fact that such sentiments exist is more evidence of the fact that the potential of the Islamic fundamentalist movement is far from exhausted.

The popularity of an Islamic alternative has always been the strongest in countries where alien models of development suffered a defeat; where rulers tried either to give up Islamic traditions altogether or reduce them to insignificance.

It would be unfair to equate the situation in Iran on the eve of the Islamic revolution and the existing situation in the Muslim republics of the USSR. But, we cannot ignore the potential of social dissatisfaction, which, as seen from the experience of the Arab and Middle Eastern countries, can be expressed in a religious form.

Formation of the new Muslim states after the collapse of the Soviet Union provides a stimulus for the growth of the influence of political Islam, particularly fundamentalism. I have not referred to the impact of the parties and movements outside this region on Islam in Central Asia, the Caucasus-Transcaucasian, and Russia, but is clear that this impact is great and the Islamic renaissance in education and culture would be impossible without the help of wealthy foreign coreligionists. On the other hand, at the level of government, the Muslim world is giving no support to opposition Islamic forces and movements. On the whole, the Muslim countries stand for political stability in the Central Asian and Caucasian-Transcaucasian regions and believe, with good reason, that the stepping up of the Muslim forces may destabilize the political situation in Muslim areas. Perhaps Ta-

jikistan, where outside support was given to diverse, often mutually hostile political forces, is an exception. On the other hand, the solidarity of a number of influential fundamentalist movements of the Middle and Far East with their Central Asian and Caucasian colleagues is clear.

The Muslim republics of the former USSR have returned to the fold of the Islamic world and are producing sizable influence. The Islamic factor will evidently continue to remain a component of all conflict situations in the region.

NOTES

1. S. Polyakov, "Traditionalism in Central Asian Society," "Central Asia: Islamic Factor?" *Analytical Information Bulletin of the Postfactum News Agency*, no. 6 (April 1991): 14–16.

2. *Pravda Vostoka*, Tashkent, November 20, 1990.

3. *Narodnaya gazeta*, Dushanbe, June 11, 1992.

4. V. Bushkov and D. Mikulski, *Tajik Society at the Turning Point* (Moscow, 1992), p. 28.

5. *Musulmanskie Novosti*, Makhachkala, 1992, p. 3.

6. *Pravda Vostoka*, April 4, 1991.

7. *Narodnaya Gazeta*, February 19, 1992.

8. *Pravda Vostoka*, August 7, 1991.

9. *Kommunist Tajikistana*, Dushanbe, May 25, 1990.

10. *Nezavisimaya Gazeta*, Moscow, October 20, 1992.

11. *Literaturnaya Gazeta*, February 5, 1992.

12. *Moskovskie Novosti*, Moscow, June 7, 1992.

13. *Literaturnaya Gazeta*, August 12, 1992.

14. Resolution by the Coordinating Committee of the Muslim Boards and Congresses of Muslims of Tatarstan, Kazan, October 22, 1992.

15. *Nezavisimaya Gazeta*, January 4, 1992.

16. For more about Nakshbandiya, see A. Muhammedkhodzhaev, *The Ideology of Nakshbandism* (Dushanbe, 1991).

17. François Burgat, *L'islamisme au Maghreb* (Paris, 1988), pp. 10–11.

18. In 1992 after regional departments of the IRP were converted into independent Islamic parties in some Central Asian states, Dawlat Usmon, the party leader, maintained that most of the participants of the Astrakhan founding congress were Tajiks.

19. *Al-Wahdat*, Moscow, January 9, 1991.

20. The program and the rules of the Islamic Revival Party, pp. 6, 8.

21. Aron Atabek, *The Alash or the Kazakh Nation* (Moscow, 1991), p. 12.

22. *Khaq* (Islamic political newspaper), Alma-Ata-Moscow, no. 1 (November 1991).

23. *Panorama*, Kazan, no. 2, 1991.

24. The IRP of Tajikistan was officially registered as an independent political organization in November 1991. At the moment of registration, it was officially named the Islamic Party of Revival. The present name became affirmed in the winter of 1992.

25. The idea was repeatedly voiced by A. Atabek in conversations with me. Also see *Al-Khaq*, no. 1 (November 1991).
26. *Spravedlivost*, Grozny, no. 24 (1992).
27. See Alisher Ilkhanov, "Uzbekistan: Ethno-Social Problems of the Transitional Period," *Sotsiologicheskie Issledovaniia*, Moscow, no. 8 (1992): 12-17.
28. The Program and the Rules of the Islamic Revival Party, p. 8.

Central Asia and Transcaucasia: New Geopolitics

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The Central Asian and Transcaucasian states that have emerged following the collapse of the USSR have a number of important features. For more than seventy years they were part of a unitary state, with a single administrative regime and a common official ideology, within a common cultural context. This does not mean that all of them became equally Sovietized. As a rule, the Soviet way of life was adopted only superficially by traditional communities. Different clans ruling in the regions easily adapted to the hierarchical system of administration and control. These particularly stable groups have managed to survive in a new setting, adhering to their rules of mutual support and traditional institutions.

LOOKING FOR ONE'S OWN WAY

The differences existing between the Central Asian and Transcaucasian states have had practically no effect on their foreign policy, for two reasons. First, irrespective of their political systems, these states are looking for their niche in the international relations network and are facing similar restrictions in the sphere of choice and maneuver in the foreign policy. Second, differences between the regimes are not very evident during the transitional period, since all are just taking shape and still retain numerous post-Soviet features. In Kyrgyzstan, which is considered to have advanced further than the other Central Asian states by way of reform, the situation in remote regions remains as it has always been. President Askar Akayev commented on the situation in the following terms: "I agree with the critics accusing me of appointing wrong people to government positions. Indeed, many key posts are still being held by 'the old guard.' But if we don't see things as

they are we can ruin everything. Say, I appoint a democrat but people in the area reject him. Reforms will stop short. This is why I'd rather appoint a conservative *akim* [local chief] than a democrat."¹

The fact of having been part of the USSR has had a profound effect on the foreign policy of the newly created states. On the one hand (and this applies chiefly to Central Asia), they have gained sovereignty but lack traditions of statehood and ethnic and national identification. On the other hand, the ethnic and territorial delimitation of the 1920s helped them acquire a certain experience of quasi-state existence during the entire Soviet period when they had borders, a national language, and a clear ethnic composition. The French researcher Olivier Roy wrote, "The paradox of the Stalinist heritage consists in creating almost 'out of nothing' whole national states that came to represent a single ethnos with a single language, a certain territory and a state administration of their own."²

Entering the international arena meant for Uzbekistan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Kyrgyzstan, Kazakhstan, Azerbaijan, Armenia, and Georgia not only rapid acquisition of formal attributes of statehood—a flag, an anthem, introduction of a national language as the state language, and the presidential elections. It also meant definition of their national interests, foreign policy targets, goals, and instruments of their foreign policy. This is where lack of experience and properly trained personnel made itself immediately felt, as well as their low political culture and relative economic weakness. They have not acquired all necessary features of a truly independent foreign policy.

Despite their UN membership, their influence on global decision making remains negligible, although the very fact of their appearance on the world scene, their geopolitical position, and their ethnic and religious composition have had a profound international impact. In general, their policies represent reflex action rather than considered strategy.

In this context, crucial regional changes could be brought about by the activity of external forces rather than by choice. Such events can trigger the emergence and consolidation of unions and coalitions, rapprochement and estrangement of the states. These processes, which are present in embryonic form, can change the structure of international relations rapidly and result in the appearance of zones of influence of the most powerful Asian states attempting to strengthen their positions along the southern borders of the former USSR.

The Central Asian and Transcaucasian republics have limited means of implementation of foreign policy, which goes counter to their strong urge to become full-fledged international actors. When still within the USSR, they saw a relatively rapid rise in economy and education, and they enjoyed protection in dealing with foreign policy problems. This latter condition did not prepare them for their own activities in foreign affairs. On the whole, the Central Asian republics were not seeking disintegration of the

Soviet Union as they looked for greater independence. As Dr. Maqbool Ahmad Bhatti from Pakistan justly put it, "With nearly 100 percent literacy, a highly developed infrastructure and social services, and a per capita income of around \$2500 (which is seven times that of Pakistan), the population of the region developed a certain stake in its association with the relatively advanced Slavic republics which was reflected in the keenness of the local leadership to preserve some sort of a central entity in the former Soviet Union."³ Although the per capita income figures may be exaggerated if they are taken from official Soviet statistical sources, the republics were interested in preserving an economic relationship with the Slavic portion of the former USSR.

In the second half of 1993 centripetal trends in the CIS became more pronounced. Political causes played a most important role in driving Azerbaijan and Georgia to the commonwealth. The conflicts around Nagorno-Karabakh and unfavorable military developments have contributed to a change of political leadership in Azerbaijan. Geidar Aliyev was elected the president of the Republic. His ascent to power has changed the orientation of the country that is now seeking Russia's help in the settlement of the conflict. The prospect of wider economic cooperation within the CIS is also inviting for Azerbaijan.

Edward Shevardnadze, who in autumn 1993 was facing the disintegration of Georgia due to the successful offensive of the Abkhazian troops and of the ex-president's supporters, had no other choice but to turn to Russia.

There was a lot of speculation as to what forces in Russia were interested in such a turn of events, and whether those forces had such results in mind when they provided support for the Abkhazians. It is well known that the Russian parliament stood full square behind the Abkhazian leaders. At the same time the position of the military and of certain people from the president's team was not clear enough. It was obvious that Russia was very much concerned about dangerous developments in the area which threatened her own territorial integrity. Activities of foreign countries in the region, primarily of Turkey, who was getting involved in the conflicts there, demanded a more authoritative stand from Russia. She increased military forces stationed in the North Caucasus. With Azerbaijan and Georgia joining the CIS her special role in the region was stressed.

For the Central Asian republics economic considerations went first. Their efforts to strengthen cooperation within the CIS became especially evident in the summer of 1993. Before that the Central Asian countries were trying to find more promising partners abroad and hoped to settle their difficulties on the basis of regional cohesion. Civil war in Tajikistan made Turkic leaders feel threatened by the possible spread of the "Tajik infection" over their territories and pushed them toward closer coordination of action.

On January 4, 1993, the Central Asian leaders met in Tashkent at the initiative of the Uzbek president. The participants came up with the idea of closer cooperation in everything, including price policy, the development of communications systems, energy, and fuel supplies. The parties also decided to exchange embassies. The heads of states confirmed their readiness to lend support to the Tajik leadership.⁴

During the Tashkent meeting, the leaders of the Central Asian republics put in doubt for the first time the vitality of the CIS and declared that they might be forced to form an independent union, which later might become a political and military one. The Tashkent summit gave an outline of a new geopolitical union (though its basis was unclear) that could bring about further changes in the structure of the international relations in Asia.⁵

By the second half of 1993 it became obvious that the region was as far away from an economic and political union as ever. Economic ties with Russia and dependence on her aid and wide market remained vitally important for the republics, thus making it impossible for them to sever existing ties. Their willingness to become part of an economic union within the CIS would not have been so pronounced if Russia did not change her previously negative attitude toward the problem of economic intergration with Central Asian states that were lagging behind. Political considerations and intention to preserve the net of communications and trade routes through the region prevailed over purely economic approaches that were current in Russia. With the Central Asian republics having realized that for the time being there was no substitute for Russia, the latter could exert pressure on them, trying to make them more receptive to her demands in economic domain.

In July 1993 Russia, Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, Tajikistan and Armenia concluded an agreement on a single monetary zone. This meant unification of main economic regulations according to the Russian pattern, and free movement of the work force, capital, etc. In autumn 1993, contours of an economic union came into being, but these ideas were not realized.

A new stage of collaboration of the post-Soviet states was dictated by the necessity of defending common borders (in the case of Tajikistan) and of creating peace-keeping forces that would control the situation in the conflict zones. So, protracted conflicts in the post-Soviet territory became important driving forces in a search for joint actions.

The centripetal trends in the CIS are not necessarily irreversible. They can be changed under the influence of developments either inside Russia, other member-states, or both. In any case, the role of ties with foreign partners will tend to increase. The impact of all this is not yet clear. In the best case, such a relationship might become a good addition to the potential of the CIS. In the worst, it might start to ruin the CIS if its members find the newly established ties more beneficial than cooperation within the commonwealth.

Oil and gas and skilled and cheap labor in the Muslim republics can attract large projects with important political implications and bring about further changes in the geopolitical situation.

An analysis of the foreign policy targets of the Central Asian and Transcaucasian republics as well as of the objectives of various external forces struggling for power in the region can help to reveal the possibilities and limitations of the main actors involved in international relations in this part of the world. Under such conditions the external forces become more than just a background for the conflicts raging within the territory of the former USSR. Their influence upon these conflicts can either stabilize the situation or enhance the instability. Finally, developments in the new republics also affect their foreign neighbors.

The collapse of the unitary multinational state has strengthened separatist trends based on ethnic and national differences in the surrounding multinational states. Certain analysts believe that "there is already concern that the separatist aspirations in Kashmir and Punjab in India, in Sind in Pakistan and in Tibet and Xinjiang in China or in Indonesia's East Timor are now bound to be strengthened. The Soviet fragmentation also demonstrates that if the ethnic, religious and democratic aspirations of various nationalities/minorities inhabiting these states are not realized, then the day is not far off when the center will not be able to hold union together."⁶ The menace of destabilization, if not disintegration of the multinational states in Asia, also becomes a major geopolitical factor in the situation of the post-Soviet territories.

The republics of Central Asia and Transcaucasus are looking both East and West. The problems they face cannot be solved without investments, infrastructure development, and sophisticated technologies. Economic problems are the basis of many conflicts in this area, though frequently these clashes have a superficial interethnic or political coloring. The economic rivalry can be seen in the Kirgiz-Uzbek clashes in Osh in 1990 and in the organized massacre of Meskhetian Turks in Fergana. Bloody events in Tajikistan were to a large extent triggered by an economic crisis. Political stability, the cherished goal of any government, depends on the economic situation.

At the same time, different ethnic and religious factors, as well as general cultural and geographical proximity, determine the choice of partners. Muslim states were culturally uprooted as the result of attempts to introduce atheism and to Russify the Muslim population (introduction of the Cyrillic alphabet, limited use of national languages, etc.). National self-identification, which the former Soviet republics intensely aspire to, determines the importance of developing relations with ethnically and culturally close nations, which are, in turn, interested in restoring relations with their kin. That the Persian-speaking Tajiks attach major importance to their relations with Iran and Afghanistan, that the Turkic republics have a special attitude

toward their relations with Turkey, that the new independent Muslim states seek to establish relations with Islamic countries (Arabs, Pakistan) is undisputed. However, making friends with those who are close in ethnic, linguistic, or geographical terms can also have certain side effects. The scale of such effects depends on the size and strength of this or that country and the degree of influence it may be subjected to. According to Paul Goble, the first rule of the international policy of a small country is that it needs a big friend at a distance since friends that are near tend to be oppressive.⁷

Understandably, not all the republics under review are small or weak, and their weakness might be temporary. Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan have the opportunity to become regional superpowers. Turkmenistan, with its tremendous oil and gas deposits but nonexistent infrastructure, might prove quite vulnerable to foreign influence. Small-sized, economically and politically weak Tajikistan, bleeding white with civil war, may face the acute problem of a too strong outside influence. Armenia, too, is in a plight due to the conflict with Azerbaijan, the blockade, and the after-effects of a devastating earthquake.

IMPACT OF FOREIGN FORCES

The republics in question do not have the prerogative of choosing partners and friends. On the contrary, they are being chosen by external forces, interested in establishing or strengthening their influence in a particular subregion where they find a vacuum left by a reduced Russian presence.

The major Asian countries involved in competition for the post-Soviet states in Central Asia and Transcaucasia can be divided into several groups depending on the political tools they use: diplomatic bargaining, propaganda, or economic rewards, including military sales. State-operated military supplies have not yet materialized that can be accounted for by the presence of Russian troops in their territories and by the specific way of forming their own national forces on the basis of the shared military property of the former USSR. The situation may change in future. This will hinge on the speed with which the former USSR republics acquire sovereignty status, as well as upon the eventual weakening of military ties with Russia and within the CIS.

Most active in using various means of influence is Turkey. Turkish diplomats are promoting bilateral relations and trying to create new interstate associations as well as enlarging the existing ones by involving the new republics. In its propaganda campaign, Turkey advertises its development model, stresses ethnic kinship, and offers its mediatory services in contacts with the West. Economically, it also has a number of advantages. Although deprived of large assets of its own, Turkey is capable of acquiring them for organizing large-scale projects. It is quite prepared to take commercial risks. It has experience in international relations and a skilled work force.

Iran has fewer possibilities. Within the vast Turkic territories, only Tajiks are a titular nation and speak a language belonging to the Iranian group. Republics ruled by the post-Soviet regimes are not in favor of the Iranian model of development. At the same time, Iran is far more moderate in its propaganda campaign than Turkey but offers assistance in building motorways and railways to ensure free trade access by the Central Asian republics to the Persian Gulf and in laying gas and oil pipelines. Substantial geographical advantages of Iran, which has very long common borders with Azerbaijan and Turkmenistan, as well as its economic capabilities, make it a major partner for the republics of Central Asia and Transcaucasia.

China, moving gradually toward a leading position in the struggle for influence in the post-Soviet area, has similar geographical advantages. It has far fewer limitations than its Middle Eastern rivals. A regulated economy, which is more compatible with the economies of the Central Asian republics, a secular state, and available financial means are also on the plus side. China offers the Central Asian states the use of its territory to gain direct access to the Pacific and on to the Far East and Southeast Asia.

Wealthy Arab countries are situated farther from Central Asia. Their influence is determined not only by geographical position but also by a limited choice of instruments available to them. For instance, Saudi Arabia prefers to use the medium of religion and culture. Famous for their wariness, the Saudis restrain themselves from investing and participating in projects and are involved exclusively in trading activities. Recently Oman has broken this rule by taking part in an exploitation of the oil deposits in Kazakhstan, building an oil pipeline and mediating between Alma-Ata and US Chevron.⁸ Egypt, which is interested in establishing relations with these republics, can offer them too little due to the lack of means.

Pakistan tries to secure its influence through ECO; it has also offered to build a road from Central Asia to Karachi. However, with war raging in Afghanistan, such a project has little prospects. Lack of financial resources will not let Pakistan advance large-scale economic projects or participate in setting up of infrastructure. Recently propaganda-oriented policy has been used more by certain fundamentalist groupings interested in boosting political Islam in the former USSR than by the government itself. The Ismailite community has also become an important factor.

The influence of some Afghan factions on the situation in the region is limited mainly to Tajikistan. Later in this chapter I shall show how they have contributed to further destabilization of the situation in this country engulfed in the civil war.

In addition to the first circle of countries exerting their influence on the southern pole of the former USSR, there exists a second one, which includes the United States and the developed countries of the West. They have a direct impact on the situation because of their diplomatic relations with the post-Soviet states, including political and economic agreements with them.

At the same time, the West acts indirectly, trying to establish a balance of forces in the first circle more suitable to its aims. Worrying about further growth of fundamentalism, which has been traditionally ascribed by the West to the Iranian policy, the United States is promoting Turkey as the most suitable model for the Muslim republics. Adoption of this model fully correlates with Western interests.

On the whole, the neighboring Asian countries are acting independently in establishing and strengthening their relations with the post-Soviet states. Only to a minor degree can their role be corrected by giving additional financial assistance to partners with better prospects. However, different political forces in Russia have different opinions as to the role of the West now. The national patriots are generally wary of the West and call for limiting rapprochement with these countries, claiming that Russia has its own, purely Asiatic traditions. This position was presented by Russia's minister of foreign affairs, Andrei Kozyrev, at the session of the CSCE in Stockholm in December 1992 in order to underscore the possible political consequences of President Yeltsin's eventually leaving office.⁹ This position can be seen as a moderate conservative approach. The broad spectrum of political forces in Russia features far more extremist stances, which tend to accuse the West of all kinds of machinations.

A columnist from an ultranationalist newspaper, A. Chichkin presents a typical "geopolitical" vision of the situation:

Everything is interrelated. Since further expansion and influence of the radical Arab Islamic regimes in the Middle East is limited due to the military and political presence of the West (in Turkey, Saudi Arabia, Pakistan), these regimes (in Iraq, Libya, Afghanistan) are being sort of "invited" to the vast territories of the CIS, including the Caucasus and Central Asia. This is why the NATO and the UN which is subordinate to the NATO turn a blind eye to Karabakh, Ossetia, Abkhazia, to toppling of Gamsakhurdia and the "encirclement" of Armenia. The southern and south-eastern territories of the CIS are a kind of compensation made by the West to Baghdad and especially to Tehran for the political failures in the Persian Gulf. Whereas Iraq, Libya, and Iran with their tremendous oil and gas resources still pursue an independent policy and appeal to an Arab Islamic unity, the NATO seeks to secure its interests in the region by way of offering "geographic bribes" to the powerful Iran, warding it off the Middle East and Northern Africa.¹⁰

The post-Soviet territory is viewed by the Russian extreme nationalist wing as an area for settling scores between the West and the Muslim radical regimes at the expense of Russia and other republics of the CIS. Certainly, it is an extremist stance, although exaggerated notions of the role of the Western countries along the southern borders of the former USSR are rather widespread in Russia.

Below we shall examine the specific goals and the steps undertaken by the chief Asian rivals in Central Asia and Transcaucasia with the aim of

achieving them, as well as their impact on the situation in the areas of tension. Both large-scale projects and various instruments of military-political influence will be discussed. Conflicts, on the other hand, adversely affect investments and the realization of projects, and they hamper economic and political stabilization, which is the aim of foreign aid. Discussions of a \$20-billion contract between the US Chevron Corporation and Kazakhstan concerning the exploitation of the Tengiz oil field were a prime example. According to experts, the oil pipeline was to stretch from Tengiz westward to the Black Sea or across Turkey to the Mediterranean. It would have to be laid through the Caucasus and Transcaucasia, but they are at war. Hence the experts proposed to lay the pipe through Turkmenistan and farther southward across Iran to the terminal on Kharg Island in the Persian Gulf. That meant that Iran's role would be strengthened, which did not suit a number of American and Western high officials wary of and hostile toward the Iranian regime.¹¹

Transformation of the geopolitical environment is not being accompanied by adequate changes in traditional notions about relations between states (for instance, between the Western countries and Iran). Judging by this, such lagging behind will hinder the establishment of new zones of economic and political cooperation and might add fuel to the conflicts boiling in the territory of the former USSR.

TURKEY

Following the end of the cold war, Turkey lost much of its role as a Western ally holding back the spread of hostile influence and ideology. Turkey has also become aware that its membership in the European Community is not likely to materialize soon. Therefore, it is faced with the dilemma of choosing a foreign policy that will strengthen its position while maintaining and increasing its importance for the West. Attempts to become a regional center of power by pursuing a definite policy in the republics of the former USSR have also been undertaken. At different stages, these aims have become contradictory. Some of Turkey's actions in the Muslim and non-Muslim republics of the former USSR do not always suit the interests of the West. And in practice some of its moves tended to destabilize the situation, particularly in Transcaucasia.

Turkey has a number of advantages that seem attractive to the post-Soviet leaders. In addition to linguistic affinity—in the Central Asia alone 70 percent of the population are Turks—Turkey offers an example of a relatively dynamic market economy, secular government, respect of Islamic traditions, and a democratic system. And Turkey's policy has a very wide range of interests: the Black Sea and the creation there of an economic zone, the Caucasus and Transcaucasia where Turkey has its own attitude toward various conflicts, as well as efforts undertaken within the Economic Co-

operation Organization together with Iran and Pakistan, Middle East and, membership in NATO. At the same time, Turkey, being a secular state, is also an observer in the Islamic Conference Organization. Turkey's activities and its intensive propaganda of advantages of the Turkish experience have yielded results. Turkey has been often acclaimed in the Muslim republics. President Islam Karimov of Uzbekistan announced that "my country will go forward by the Turkish route." President Nursultan Nazarbaev of Kazakhstan said, "We want to implement a free market, and the only model we have is Turkey." President Akayev of Kyrgyzstan called Turkey "the morning star that guides the path of the Turkic republics."¹²

The former president of Azerbaijan, Abulfaz Elchibei, whom many experts believe to be more of a Turkish than an Azeri nationalist, promoted the decision of the government in January 1992 on the adoption of the Latin alphabet instead of the Cyrillic one, which had been introduced by the Moscow authorities in 1937. Many in Azerbaijan were not enthusiastic about this decision. Elderly people were hit hardest, since they would have to learn the alphabet anew and found themselves, in effect, illiterate as a result of this experiment.

The Turkish leaders, emphasizing ethnic affinity, interpret rather broadly the notion of a Turkic republic. For instance, Bilal N. Simsir, foreign ministry director-general of relations with the CIS countries, stated: "When we say Central Asian Turkic republics we mean Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan. Although the Persian dialect is spoken in Tajikistan, more than one-third of the population is of Turkish origin. Tajiks are Sunni Moslems not Shiites like Iranians and thus closer to Turkey. That is why Tajikistan is included in the Central Asian Turkic republics group. . . . In addition, there are autonomous or semi-independent Turkic republics such as Daghistan, Tataristan, and Bashkirdistan with which Turkey also has relations."¹³ Leaving aside certain geographical incongruities—Azerbaijan has nothing to do with Central Asia—there are some noteworthy features in this list.

First, attempts to place the Persian-speaking Tajikistan among the Turkic states is at variance with the actual state of affairs. Tajiks have always set themselves apart from the Turkic populations, even in the context of the persistently vague national identification. More than that, during the bloody conflagrations in the republic, there emerged a certain distrust toward Uzbeks and Turks in general. Attempts were made by the Islamic nationalist forces to turn the interclan and interregional conflict into a Tajik-Uzbek rivalry. Such attempts were made with the view of consolidating the Tajiks split by the civil war on an anti-Uzbek basis. Consequently, the legitimate government established and approved by the Supreme Soviet of Tajikistan used the aid provided by Uzbekistan to suppress its Islamic and nationalist opponents. The role of Uzbekistan in the Tajik events is fraught with escalation of contradictions between the two nations. In this context, an

excessively active Turkish policy in Tajikistan or its indirect attempts to influence the situation through Uzbekistan could deepen the conflict and make it an interethnic one.

Second, taking into account the willingness of Turkey to become a major partner and a patron for the ethnically related republics of the former USSR, which fall within the sphere of its interests, inclusion of subjects of the Russian Federation in such a list can do nothing but bring up questions. Naturally, the Russian republics have the right to choose among the most promising and advantageous partners; but this does not automatically mean Turkey. This particular target-oriented policy of Turkey could bring about negative consequences.

Today the general growth of ethnic nationalism has led to a tendency to unite all the Turkic peoples of the former USSR irrespective of their religious affiliation. The believers among Gagauzes from Moldova and Ukraine, Chuvashes, Khakasses, and Yakuts are Orthodox, Tuvinians are Lamaists, and Karaims are Judaists. Turkic peoples are also racially quite different. Many peoples of the Urals and Siberia, some of whom are Buddhists and Christians, are Turks. This would mean that contrary to a natural economic gravitation toward partners in the Far East, they would have to start to reorient themselves toward the Middle East. The outlook for forming such a Turan commonwealth seems rather poor, but Russian national radicals have already expressed their fears about a foreign conspiracy to split Russia along a Turkic line from Kazakhstan to Yakutia and obstruct the "rebirth" of Russia. Turkey can hardly cherish such ambitious plans, but the idea of Turkic unity, which it propagates and realizes in its policy, is capable of strengthening the supporters of the idea of the Great Turan and thus offer still more trumps to the Russian nationalists opposing the Russian president and the Russian government.

The Turkish leaders, earlier than some other Asian powers, have realized the opportunities offered by establishing relations with their new partners. The diplomatic offensive of Turkey in the regions of interest began when the USSR still existed and Mikhail Gorbachev started to liberalize the regime. During that period, not the state but rather private companies and individuals started establishing contacts with the Turkic republics. Official relations remained unchanged, but Turkish tourists began visiting the USSR, and the press and television expanded their coverage of life of the Soviet Turkic population. Public opinion was being prepared for involvement in this new region.

Official state relations were established with Azerbaijan earlier than with any other republic. During the visit to Turkey of the president, Ayaz Murtalibov, of Azerbaijan, two agreements on economic and cultural cooperation were signed. It is significant that these agreements were signed at the time when Azerbaijan was still part of the USSR and its president could not have been received as such according to protocol (he was given a minister's

reception). The legal status of the documents signed was not clear either. Nevertheless, implementation of all of them started, and Turkey, as far as one can judge, turned out to be the only country to breach the accepted practice of the intergovernmental relations with the USSR pursuing its far-reaching strategic goals. Turkey found in Azerbaijan a partner seeking establishment of closer relations, interested in gaining independence from the USSR, and laying foundations for its future sovereign status.¹⁴

Following their proclamation of sovereignty, the former Soviet republics found it easier to develop their relations with the outside world. Turkey also displayed a willingness to intensify contacts during this period. In 1990–1991, prior to the disintegration of the USSR, twenty agreements were signed, and twenty high-level visits were organized between Turkey, Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, Turkmenistan, and Kyrgyzstan. After August 1991 new prospects appeared when the republics gained their independence. Turkey was the first country to recognize the independence of Azerbaijan and the other republics. Immediately, it established diplomatic relations with them and exchanged embassies.

For Turkey, the relations with the republics appear not only as a means of satisfying its economic needs and interests; they are also an important political and ideological tool. It is not the question of pan-Turkic ideas *per se*, which enjoy a rather limited influence in Turkey itself, but the use of the ethnic factor in shaping a new regional system under the auspices of Turkey, a “Turkic universe” of sorts. According to Bilal N. Simsir, “We are witnessing the emergence in history of a Turkish World, in which process important responsibilities befall our country.”¹⁵

In November 1992, cooperation between Turkey and the five Turkic-speaking republics (Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, Turkmenistan, and Kyrgyzstan) received another impetus: the Ankara Declaration was signed. The political part of the document states the will of the parties to strengthen security in the region, to promote the settlement of regional conflicts, and to pursue agreed policies on the international arena. The economic clauses set forth conditions for cooperation in the fields of technology and communications, working out and putting into operation joint projects in the oil and gas industries.

Alongside with the Ankara Declaration, Turkey planned to adopt one more document concerning the construction of a pipeline to export gas and oil from Turkmenistan and Kazakhstan to Europe across Turkish territory. The Kazakh president rejected the idea of a separate economic document and proposed to include its main provisions in the Ankara Declaration.¹⁶ Presumably, this stance can be accounted for by his ideas on greater diversification of his country’s economic ties; he seems uninterested in Turkey’s becoming a major link between the Turkic republics and Europe. Unlike his Kazakh opposite number, President Niyazov of Turkmenistan approved of the Turkish plan and after the summit signed with S. Demirel an inter-

governmental agreement on building a gas pipeline across Turkish territory.¹⁷

Since Turkmenistan is interested in preserving the CIS to a lesser degree than the other republics, it is trying to pull itself out of crisis by using its own resources and by consolidating a new authoritarian regime, and economic cooperation with Turkey is not so limited—all the more so because of an agreement on Iran's participation in the exploitation of oil deposits in the republic, thus establishing a certain balance.

At the same time Turkey's attempts to make the republics more dependent on it, Turkey increase its influence in such organizations as ECO, where it takes part along with Iran and Pakistan. Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan, Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, and Kyrgyzstan have also become members. Tajikistan, too, has become a *de facto* member of the ECO, but because of hostilities, the representative of the republic was unable to go to Islamabad to sign the documents at the end of November 1992.¹⁸

The geographical expansion of the ECO and inclusion of new economically powerful states (Uzbekistan and Kazakhstan) make this organization the largest trade bloc, second only to the European Community. The ECO plans to cut trade tariffs and establish a joint air company, an investment bank, and a satellite communication system.

Broader participation in the ECO stirred up rivalry for influence in the Muslim republics of the former USSR between Turkey, Pakistan, and Iran. Pakistan and Iran tend to view the renewed ECO primarily as a Muslim association. Prime Minister Navaz Sharif of Pakistan emphasized at the signing ceremony of the ECO charter that it "embodies aspirations of 300 million people sharing common heritage and culture."¹⁹ Iran is inclined to turn ECO into a tool of its own influence by using its economic advantages, which Pakistan does not possess. Addressing the Seventeenth Session of the Islamic Bank of Development, the Iranian president warned that Central Asia and Azerbaijan may become a raw materials appendage to the West. "To help these countries avoid traps set by the Western powers, we should render them large-scale economic assistance."²⁰

Unlike Pakistan and Iran, Turkey has another means of moving into the south of the former USSR, the Ankara Declaration, and, it hopes to reestablish in future the "silk route." Turkey's multidirectional activity enables it to lay ambitious plans. The "outlines of a kind of Turkic commonwealth are beginning to emerge," and planners in the Turkish Foreign Ministry anticipate the creation of two free trade zones, one for the Black Sea littoral and the other for Central Asia, with "Turkey linking the two."²¹

Nevertheless, the political expectations placed on the Turkish-Turkic relations obviously exceed the capabilities of the Turkish Republic, which is also facing a number of limitations. According to a Russian Turkologist, Viktor Nadein-Rayevsky,

These years the country has been living through a period of "Islamic Renaissance" characterized by rather ominous features. A war of extermination against Kurds in the eastern provinces of Turkey, systematic breaches of human rights . . . , the ongoing occupation of Northern Cyprus and problems arising from dozens of thousands of Turks moving there from Asia Minor, all these put severe restrictions on Ankara's foreign policy.²²

Although Turkey's large-scale regional plans can hardly be expected to be fully implemented, its less ambitious plans concerning establishment of its influence in the Central Asian countries may succeed.

Turkey has started active penetration into those vital spheres of individual republics' life where Russia traditionally played a leading role. Internal security of the Central Asian states has become one of the objects of Turkish attention. Turkey intends to train police personnel from Turkmenistan²³ and Uzbekistan. In this instance, the countries involved are interested in weakening their dependence on Russia, but the readiness of Turkish authorities to offer such services can have far-reaching consequences, making the country a shadow participant in Central Asian internal developments.

As the Central Asian countries step up their contacts with Turkey, they simultaneously aim at greater diversification of their foreign relations while their relevant potential grows and the ministries acquire a firmer footing. They do not want Ankara as the go-between in their relations with developed countries; they prefer direct contacts. Finally, they do not forget about the limits of Turkey's financial power.

Generally, Turkey pursues a pragmatic policy in Central Asia. Despite the several negative or potentially negative aspects that I have stressed, its efforts to involve these countries in regional economic associations and prospects for free zones can help the Central Asian states to move through the current transition period more rapidly.

On the other hand, Turkey often displays an ideologically colored attitude in matters concerning the Caucasian-Transcaucasian region, where its interests appear to be of much more vital importance; such an attitude cannot be helpful in settling conflicts in this strife-ridden area, chiefly the Azeri-Armenian struggle centering upon the Nagorno-Karabakh.

Naturally, Turkey could not stay aloof, and it even attempted some mediation efforts. However, the stance taken by its official leaders in spring 1992, after Armenian troops seized Lachin and Shusha and also attempted to capture the Sadarak District in the north of Nakhichevan, was very much like a threat of direct military intervention. "We'll send troops to Nakhichevan. We ought to send them without hesitation. Otherwise the Nagorno-Karabakh events may be repeated there," said President Turgut Ozal.²⁴ Some opposition members of parliament demanded urgent intervention and stressed that the Treaty of Kars (1921) granted this right to Turkey.

One cannot deny the special importance of Nakhichevan for Turkey. This enclave in Armenia is its only direct link with Muslims in the former USSR. Fierce fighting along the Armenian-Nakhichevan border sped the opening of the bridge across the Arax River linking the Azeri town of Sadarak with the Turkish Indir.²⁵

Turkey's military intervention might have transformed it into a wide international conflict, necessarily involving Russia and other commonwealth republics bound by the Collective Security Treaty signed in Tashkent. According to it, the signatories pledge direct military support for any others if they become a victim of aggression—and Armenia is among the signatories. This mainly concerns Russia, with its troops stationed in Armenia, Azerbaijan, and Nakhichevan.

Seeing the events taking a dramatic turn, Marshal Shaposhnikov, then in command of the Commonwealth United Armed Forces, said at a Moscow news conference on May 20, 1992: "If another party joins [the Armenian-Azeri conflict] we may find ourselves on the brink of World War III."²⁶

Though designed more for domestic consumption than reflecting Turkey's real intentions, as experts thought, its leaders' warlike pronouncements met with an emotional response in Armenia. The 1915 genocide is still alive in its people's memory, now heated by the Karabakh hostilities. The public looks with anxiety at Azerbaijan's pro-Turkish orientation and sees Armenia as an advanced outpost of Christianity in the way of Muslim invasion from the East. Armenia, too, has its nationalists. They see Turkey's policy as a testimony to the revived pan-Turkic intentions whose implementation was always hampered by the "Armenian wedge" cutting into the Turkish monolith. In particular, the opposition party Dashnaksutyun was dead set against contacts with Turkey and repeatedly arranged anti-Turkish demonstrations.²⁷

Turkey's open support for Azerbaijan fueled the Armenian fear of arms supply to the conflict zone. In August 1992, Ismet Sezgin, Turkey's minister of interior, announced that his country decided to purchase arms from Russia for up to U.S. \$300 million—mainly helicopters and APCs.²⁸ With the Nakhichevan-Turkey border opened after the Arax Bridge was commissioned, Armenian experts said the Russian arms could find their way to the Baku arsenals.²⁹

Despite extended contacts between Turkey and Armenia, the former's policy in many instances undermined the nascent confidence between these countries. In September 1992, Turkey sent to the Armenian capital a military plane with its army inspectors and ICAO officers on board to verify Armenia's compliance with the treaty limiting European-based armed forces. Yet in violation of this treaty, neither military nor civilian authorities in Armenia, nor the command of Russian troops stationed in its territory, were notified beforehand about the inspection.³⁰ There was another source of Armenian concern: the Turkish government did not give a speedy reply to

the request to sell 100,000 tons of grain on credit. The Georgian-Abkhaz conflict blocked the shipments in the Ukrainian and Russian ports, though the Turkish grain started coming in November 1992.³¹ Possibly such episodes in bilateral relations would be of no great importance were they not seen in the context of the acute Nagorno-Karabakh conflict. Moreover, when Turkey suspended electricity supplies to Armenia in December 1992 after the latter's army seized ten Azeri villages, this measure could be regarded only as a hostile sanction.³² Emotions are brimming in Transcaucasia. Its tragic past requires Turkey to be far more circumspect in its policy.

There is another side to the problem: conflicts easily take on religious coloring in the Caucasian region. As Turkey helped the Abkhaz side in its conflict with Georgia, many analysts saw this aid under this particular angle, although the majority of the Abkhazians are Christians. The press mentioned Turkish volunteers fighting in Abkhazia—Muhajirs, that is, Abkhazians whose ancestors had chosen to go to Turkey at the turn of the century.³³ Turkey also gave Abkhazia financial help—about U.S. \$1 million.³⁴ This action was regarded not so much as pro-Abkhaz as anti-Georgian, directed against a Christian country. On the whole, any Turkish interference in the Caucasian and Transcaucasian events can increase ethno-religious tensions, and such an increase can lead to new hostilities, seriously endangering Russia's interests.

In 1993, while the influence of Russia in the region was obviously growing, Turkey undertook efforts to improve relations with Moscow, through joint Russian-American-Turkish actions directed toward the settlement of conflict around Nagorno-Karabakh, and later on during the visit of the Turkish prime-minister to Russia.

Turkish-Russian relations will remain a determining factor in Central Asian, Transcaucasian, and Caucasian developments. Moscow has declared that it assigns top priority to its relations with Ankara. In reply, Ankara declared its renunciation of any pan-Turkic aims. Does this mean that Russia and Turkey have at last divided their spheres of interest, thus entering a relationship without conflict of any kind? According to one opinion, it is from Turkey that Russia can expect invaluable help—in particular, in setting the numerous conflicts within the CIS. As Andrei Aksenenko argues in his *Nezavisimaya Gazeta* article, Turkey can be of help to Russia, first, because it knows better than the Russians how to solve conflicts in a milieu "alien to our psychology and mentality. Secondly, the Turks are eager to offer their mediation to us—and we, God knows why, see it as an encroachment on our positions in the Caucasus, Crimea, Transcaucasia and Central Asia. But this is not so. It is merely a question of restoring a natural balance of forces in the vast region—a balance broken in its time by Moscow interference."³⁵

We believe that such estimates of possible cooperation between Russia and Turkey in settling conflicts are overoptimistic. It has been passed over

in silence whether the parties to the conflict are willing to accept Turkey as a disinterested arbiter. Its mediation would hardly be welcome in Tajikistan or in Georgia. And, why should Russia, itself a Eurasian country, consider the natural and geographic milieu of southern Eurasia as quite alien to its own mentality?

One cannot deny, of course, that Turkey may be helpful in settling conflicts, yet in a number of ex-Soviet regions, its interests will never be in full harmony with those of Russia. On the contrary, some future disagreements seem to be quite possible.

For example, the two countries could not find common ground on the issue of composition of peace-keeping forces in Transcaucasia. Russia insisted that only her military detachments could play this role in the region. In autumn 1993 there was an exchange of mutual accusations. The reason for this was, on the one hand, Turkish desire to review the regime of free navigation through the Straits and, on the other, Russia's intention to review the point of the Treaty on Conventional Armed Forces in Europe that limits the number of her military equipment deployed in the Northern Caucasus.

When considering the principal directions of Turkey's policy in regard to the post-Soviet republics as well as its possible impact on the general situation, one should also take into account that Turkey itself cannot be immune to a reciprocal influence of its new partners. This concerns Central Asia, for instance, whose Islamic revival can encourage the same process in Turkey. The development of various conflicts in the Caucasus and the Transcaucasia, too, makes itself felt in the internal political setup, giving an edge to nationalistic feelings, which government has to reckon with.

IRAN

The disintegration of the USSR and the appearance in its stead of a number of newly independent states in the area of world politics has offered Iran a unique chance to break out of its isolation. The establishment of relations with the post-Soviet republics came at a time when the Islamic republic had entered a new stage of its evolution, with gradual retreat from rigid, and unacceptable, principles calling for an export of the Islamic revolution; at the same time its foreign policy was acquiring a pragmatic content.

Moreover, it seems that the change in the overall geopolitical situation has encouraged a rapid spread of pragmatism. At first, Iranian leaders had been thinking in terms of religious and cultural penetration, but soon they realized that however important the revival of the Muslim tradition might be, development of infrastructure, capital investment, and financial aid mattered much more for their new partners. The Institute of Political and International Studies (IPIS), under the auspices of the Iranian Foreign Ministry, organized a special conference, "The Disintegration of the USSR and Its Impact upon the Third World" (Tehran, March 1992). In particular, it was

stressed that Iran had concluded about thirty basic agreements (twenty-six of them on economic matters) with the Central Asian states and Azerbaijan.

As compared with Turkey, Iran appears to have a lot of advantages. Among them figure the longstanding tradition of mutually profitable relations with imperial Russia and, later, with the USSR, financial capabilities, large enough to allow considerable investments in its partners' economies as well as the important ability to mobilize resources at the state level without considering the mood of private businessmen that are usually unwilling to run commercial risks.

At the same time, Iran has to face several limiting factors that may complicate its position in the new geopolitical zone. The first is its desire to be the promoter of Islamic traditions in the Muslim republics. This desire has to clash with quite unfavorable realities. Central Asia is populated by Sunni Muslims; thus, there is a religious barrier between them and the Shi'ite Iran. Azerbaijanis are the sole exception, yet they are ethnic Turks, thus leaning more to Ankara than to Tehran. Tajiks, culturally the closest to Iranians, look to Saudi Arabia for religious education—and the latter is eagerly exploiting this circumstance. And this is not surprising, considering that in Iran itself "the Afghan refugees, though themselves Persian-speaking, are not yielding to assimilation; they have got their own network of schools which are often financed by Saudi Arabia."³⁶

Second, the mounting wave of ethnic nationalism in the former USSR can cause instability in Iran itself. In this respect, Azerbaijan arouses greatest concern, since its Azeri population numbers about 6 million, while in Iran their number is twice or, perhaps, even three times as high. There were clear indications that Iran was worried by the prospect of Azerbaijani leaders' rising claims to Iranian Azerbaijan. As early as the spring 1992, a number of Iranians of Azeri descent had to leave their top posts. But the Iranian Azeris themselves were worried by possible destabilization, and they stressed their interest in Russian troops' remaining in the republic of Azerbaijan since their withdrawal could result in undesirable consequences.³⁷

The Iranian leadership was also alarmed by a series of declarations from the Azeri side—that Iran is populated mostly by Turks. For instance, when an *Izvestia* correspondent asked Geidar Aliyev, the former leader of Nakhichevan and now the president of Azerbaijan, what made the republic decide to upgrade its relations with Iran, the answer was: "We share a long border and we have had historical contacts of long standing. And, by the way, Tehran is situated in Southern Azerbaijan."³⁸

Under these conditions, the development of many-sided contacts with Azerbaijan has become a matter of tremendous importance for Tehran. The latter is making every effort to prove its indispensability to Baku. In May 1992 the two countries signed an agreement envisaging construction in the near future of a railway and a highway to connect Azerbaijan and Nakhichevan via Iran, bypassing Armenia.³⁹ The value of these roads for Azer-

baijan can hardly be overestimated. They will partly compensate Azerbaijan for the losses incurred during the Armenian-Azeri conflict, giving it direct access to Nakhichevan, and they will be a shortcut to Turkey across the Arax Bridge. Possibilities of Iranian gas supplies to Azerbaijan and Nakhichevan also came under discussion since Turkmenistan had cut its own supply.

A flow of Azeri refugees driven to Iran in 1993 as a result of increased Armenian-Azerbaijani hostilities made Tehran even more concerned about developments in the area, and contributed to further advancement of its relations with the new leadership of Azerbaijan.

Iranian activity on the Azeri direction has also been caused by rivalry with Turkey, which holds strong positions in Azerbaijan. Tehran was evidently bothered by Baku's orientation toward Ankara since Abulfaz Elchibei was elected president. "No good news for Tehran" was the *Tehran Times's* comment on this election. According to this newspaper, Elchibei will be hard put trying to solve Azerbaijan's problems if he aspires to a miracle from the West and Turkey.⁴⁰

To preserve balance in its contacts with the parties to the conflict, Iran has improved relations with Armenia parallel to the extension of relations with Azerbaijan. Armenia's vice-president, Gagik Arutyunyan, visited Tehran late in December 1992 and held talks with the Iranian president. Armenia regarded the visit as a breakthrough in its economic and political relations with Iran. Prior to it, the two countries had signed about twenty agreements, none of which had been acted upon. Iran blamed Armenia for this, with its blockade of trains passing through to Iran from Azerbaijan. The talks seemed to have settled this misunderstanding, and decisions were made to construct a permanent bridge across the Arax River and a gas pipeline from Iran to open Iranian Caspian ports to Armenia-bound fuel shipments from Russia, and step up cross-border trade, to name but a few. These decisions gave confidence to the Armenian leaders and allowed Iran to demonstrate a balanced political attitude, which seemed preferable in comparison with Turkish diplomacy.⁴¹

Iran decided to counterweight the idea of a Turkic common market, seeing a menace in a belt of united Turkic republics under powerful Turkish influence in its rear with its own proposal for a league of Caspian basin countries, which was met with very mixed responses in Russia. Some analysts saw it not so much as expressing Iran's desire to counterbalance Turkey's influence with a new organization but rather as an attempt to elbow out Russia. According to Igor Belyaev, an expert on the Middle East, Tehran was enthusiastic about Russia, Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, and Turkmenistan sharing the Caspian flotilla, mainly because the situation violated the Treaty of Turkmanchai (1828), which had granted Russia exclusive right to a navy in the Caspian Sea. In these circumstances Iran seems to have acquired a right to a Caspian navy of its own.⁴² Still, not Russia but

Turkey was the main target of Iran's activity in this case—and Turkey's response to this initiative was quite negative.

The Central Asian region is the main target of Iranian policy. It offers Iran several large prospective partners. Iran started by concentrating on Turkmenistan. This was natural, with the long border between these two countries, and a million ethnic Turkmens resident in Iran who might attempt to get rid of Tehran's rule with the growth of nationalism. Although Iran's links with Turkmenia have never been very close, the situation is different now. Turkmen independence gave that country special importance in Iran's eyes. Only Iran can give the young republic—and through it, the whole of Central Asia—access to the Gulf. Construction has started on a railway to connect Turkmenistan and Iran, whose geographical position opens up the whole world to Central Asia. It is another big advantage Iran has in the race for influence in the post-Soviet republics in the region. Besides, Iran intends to aid Turkmenistan with oil and gas pipeline construction.

Tajikistan is another Central Asian object of keen interest to Iran. There is no other Persian-speaking republic in the region and no other country where the Islamic Revival Party would have such a strong position as there. In Tajikistan it had its representatives in the government between May and November 1992. Iran's hopes reached their peak during the brief period when the nationalist-Muslim opportunists were ruling that country. Characteristic in this respect was an article by A. Parviz, an Iranian author, reprinted in the Tajik press from the Iranian *Journal of Central Asian and Caucasian Studies*. Apart from arguments about the two nations' cultural affinity and Tajikistan's readiness to adopt Persian as its official language in 1994, the work contained some practical recommendations. "Iranian firms can start investments and introduce modern technologies. Land is cheap in Tajikistan for the time being. Iran's governmental bodies should purchase projects, working and still under construction, for the work to be successful. . . . Tajikistan's statesmen have no political experience. Things will go better if Iran assumes the functions of its representative in the UN, Islamic Conference, ECO and other organizations."⁴³

Iran opened bookstores and a branch of a large bank in Dushanbe. Signs in Persian appeared in the streets. The television relayed Iranian news. Iran's leaders strongly disapproved of the Moscow television, with its allegedly outrageous Western programs. On September 1, 1992, the Tajik government, in which the Islamists were represented, banned Russian radio and television broadcasts from all channels but one. (They were renewed later.)

With the civil war in Tajikistan, Iran found itself in a quandary. Its leaders could not but sympathize with the Islamic Revival Party since many of its top activists had adopted the establishment of an Islamic state as their motto. But the war was bleeding Tajikistan white, and the country's impending breakup ran counter to Iran's plans.

Here, Iran's possible attitude toward conflict situations in the former

USSR should be discussed in more detail. Both Iran's and Turkey's policies are mythologized to a great extent. The West all too often pictures Turkey as a stabilizing force (though its policy in the Caucasus and Transcaucasia does not always confirm this view), while Iran has been always portrayed as a troublemaker. There is no doubt that during the first postrevolutionary years the Iranian regime did everything to confirm this opinion; it still supports the Hezbollah and some other terrorist groups in the Middle East. It is obviously eager to establish its zones of influence in the ex-Soviet Muslim republics, and in these attempts it does recur to Islamist ideas. However, there are instances when its attitude seems to be more constructive or balanced than that of the reputedly reliable Western partners—one could mention the Armenian-Azeri conflict and the civil war in Tajikistan.

Iran attempted to act as an honest broker in the conflict around Nagorno-Karabakh. When Vitaly Naumkin and I talked to Mr. Maliki, Iran's deputy minister of foreign affairs, he stressed that the Azeris' hopes for an automatic support from Muslim states were but castles in the air. Iran was not going to offer this support and made this quite clear, whereas Turkey adopted a pro-Azeri stance and thus was not able to act as a mediator.

Iran's attitude toward this conflict was based on the following. First, it could not afford a wait-and-see policy while Turkey was earning political capital. This was clear from many sources, including Maliki. Second, Iran's leadership had to take into account the position of Moscow, which had noticeably changed from outright support for Azerbaijan to a growing consideration for Armenia's views since the Soviet Union fell apart. At the beginning of 1992, Russia was attempting to stop the bloodshed or at least downgrade the conflict. Considering the importance of Iran's relations with Russia, Iran was willing to support the Russian efforts or undertake steps of its own intended to satisfy the Russian leadership. Third, Iran's leaders were well aware of the importance of the Armenian community in their own country. Finally, they were eager to demonstrate to the West their benevolent attitude toward a Christian country.

In regard to the civil war in Tajikistan, the Iranian leadership's motives were different. In November 1992, Russia, Uzbekistan, Kyrgyzstan, and Kazakhstan proposed a number of measures to normalize the situation in that country. President Nazarbayev of Kazakhstan visited Iran several days before the Alma-Ata conference devoted to the Tajik problems. He reached an understanding with President Hashemi Rafsanjani in Tehran whereby Iran promised noninterference in the Tajik developments.⁴⁴ For his part, the Iranian president warned his guest about the danger of foreign penetration into the region: other countries "pursue only their own interests and don't care about creating conditions for peace and quiet."⁴⁵

To all appearances, too much was at stake for Iran as the Tajik conflict was in progress. Support to the opposition of nationalists and Islamists did not offer certain results but could dramatically hamper Russia's and the

three Turkic republics' efforts to stabilize a situation that, under the conditions, could bring groups ousted by the oppositionists back to power. At any rate, such developments would have played into the hand of Uzbekistan, the largest and most influential of all ex-Soviet states in Central Asia, which had already given military and other support to the Leninabad-Kulyab bloc fighting the secular nationalists and Islamists.

The results of Iran's well-balanced policy made themselves felt immediately. At the end of November 1992, President Islam Karimov of Uzbekistan paid an official visit to Tehran. Upon his arrival Karimov said that the relations between the two countries were "not yet ideal" and declared his willingness to change the situation. Karimov had always viewed Islamic fundamentalism negatively. He emphasized that Western fears concerning the powerful Iranian influence in Central Asia after the collapse of the USSR were quite unreasonable, at least as far as his own country was concerned. Karimov's visit was a turning point in Irano-Uzbek relations: a joint communiqué and seven agreements on cooperation in transport, trade, banking activities, communications, science, and technology were signed.⁴⁶

The success of the Iranian policy in Central Asia will hinge on its acceptability to the main countries of the region. Consequently, this policy will emphasize economic projects and downgrade religious and cultural relations.

OTHER ASIAN STATES

China

China has greater possibilities for developing relations with the Central Asian republics, but, it is itself facing a series of problems that may deteriorate to the point of interethnic conflicts in Xinjiang province. Sixty percent of its population is composed of Uighurs, Kazakhs, and Uzbeks. The new geopolitical situation that favors the revival of ethnic nationalism has made the control of this western province more difficult for Beijing.

"When the Soviet Union existed as one monolithic state, with minor republics powerless appendages to the Slavic states, these ethnic ties did not seem to underline a real political threat. The establishment of the handful of independent Central Asian republics, however, presents political possibilities which were once only dreams to minority groups over the borders."⁴⁷

In particular, there has appeared the possibility of a political rapprochement between the Turkic populations of the western province and their ethnic cousins in Central Asia. The end of July 1992 saw an unexpected appearance of forces whose activities may provoke clashes between China and Kyrgyzstan. In Bishkek the party "For a Free Uighurstan" held its founding congress. It declares as its goal the creation of a state of Uighurstan out of Xinjiang-Uighur autonomous region of China bordering on Kyr-

gyzstan. An appeal was made to the peoples and parliaments of the world to support the aspirations of the Uighur people for a state of their own. In October 1992, the Justice Ministry of Kyrgyzstan, in line with the leadership's attempts to remove any troublesome issues between Beijing and Bishkek, refused to register the party's statute. Some aims stated in this document—such as demasking the Chinese government's colonial policy with regard to the Uighurs and other ethnic minorities as well as striving to establish an independent Uighurstan on the Chinese territory—were described as interference in the internal affairs of a sovereign state.⁴⁸

Another important ethnic factor that will have a role to play in the relations between China and the former USSR is the Kazakh minority in Xinjiang. At the moment, around 1.5 million Kazakhs, who left their country during the Soviet era, live in the province. The Kazakhs in China consider their national destiny to be linked with that of the 12 million Uighurs struggling for greater autonomy. Neither group has been assimilated, but the threat of losing their ethnic and national identity remains.

If Kyrgyzstan, trying to prevent the Uighurs from complicating its relations with China, continues to restrain Uighur nationalism, the Kazakh government cannot brush aside the problems of its former nationals. It would prefer that the Kazakhs return to their homeland. As the American researcher Graham Fuller has noted: "At the least, this population is a sizable reserve of Kazakhs able to help redress the ethnic balance within Kazakhstan. . . . The Chinese government would probably be happy to rid its borderlands of non-Han peoples, and may be interested in striking a deal with Alma Ata on terms for repatriation of the Chinese Kazakhs. If not, Alma Ata will have to interest itself in the welfare of the Chinese Kazakhs, at the threat of friction with China."⁴⁹

Much will depend on the degree to which the border republics will have to depend on China economically. Border trade is growing. The western province represents a good market, and the standard of living of its population is higher than that of Kyrgyzstan or Kazakhstan. The fact that a new thoroughfare from Istanbul to Beijing will run through these republics increases the geopolitical significance of China for Central Asia.

China is especially interested, given the uneasy history of its relations with Russia, in strengthening its position in the region following Russia's departure in order to have an advantage in case of a Russian-Chinese conflict. Finally, Beijing cannot fail to be attracted by the economic dividends to be obtained from collaboration with the republics of the region.

Afghanistan

This country found itself directly involved in the war in Tajikistan. Various Afghan forces outside government control and settling scores among themselves used the Tajik situation for their own ends. There was a con-

tinuous flow of arms, as well as drugs, across the southern border of the former Soviet republic. The main suppliers were the Pushtun forces, controlled by the Islamic party of Afghanistan of Gulbeddin Hekmatiar. At that time, the Tajik leaders in Afghanistan, including the minister of defense, Ahmadshah Masoud, were involved in the conflict with the IPA and had no interest in destabilizing the situation in the north of the country; Hekmatiar tried to draw off part of the government troops to the north and portrayed the Tajiks as a destabilizing element. Davlat Khudonazarov, a democratically inclined political figure who opposed ex-President Nabiev in the elections, had this to say about Hekmatiar's aims: "Gulbeddin Hekmatiar's main enemy is an alliance between the Uzbeks and Tajiks of Afghanistan. If the area of conflict widens, there will inevitably be rivalry between the Uzbek and Tajik populations of the republic, which in its turn will destroy the alliance between the Uzbeks and Tajiks in Afghanistan. The quarrel between our peoples can cause an explosion throughout all of Central Asia. It is not inconceivable that Hekmatiar has worked out a very far-reaching, insidious scheme."⁵⁰

General Dustum, the commander of a detachment of the Uzbek militia, had his own game to play. In August 1992, according to our correspondent in Tajikistan, he met with a Tajik delegation headed by the vice-chairman of the Dushanbe City Council, Ruziev. At their meetings General Dustum emphasized as much as possible the dangers of Islamic fundamentalism as represented by Hekmatiar. In his opinion, the IPA is receiving help from Muslim circles in Saudi Arabia and Jordan. If Hekmatiar should win in Afghanistan, "all of Central Asia will be on fire." Every deserter from Tajikistan was claimed by Dustum to be carrying papers allegedly stamped with the seal of Tajikistan's Islamic Revival Party.

At that time it was apparently important for Dustum to present himself in the role of a fighter against Islamic fundamentalism, particularly because he was trying to secure the supply of necessary materials (in particular, aircraft oil) that had stopped due to the closure of Uzbekistan border with Tajikistan.

Besides the supply of arms to Tajikistan, Hekmatiar carried out the training of fighters recruited from among Tajik civilians, and in the ranks of opposition there were dozens of Afghan instructors.⁵¹

This ceased to be a secret by the end of October 1992, when at the time of the attempted coup organized by Safaraly Kendjaev, the whole country watched on television as Afghan volunteers fighting for the opposition chased Kenjaev's supporters from the building of the Supreme Soviet. The border with Afghanistan, being also the border of the CIS, was not sufficiently fortified. On August 4, 1992, President Yeltsin signed an order placing the border guards deployed on the Tajik-Afghan and Tajik-Chinese borders under Russia's jurisdiction.⁵² In addition to the reinforcements from

Russia, a little later some forces from Uzbekistan, Kyrgyzstan, and Kazakhstan came to the defense of the border. This did not solve the problems. In the Panj River sector alone, the border was violated fifteen to twenty times every day. The hardships of military service, when border guards were threatened and hated by all sides, led to a constant flow of soldiers leaving the place. Dozens of telegrams were being sent to the border regiments notifying sons of impending funerals, or calling them to the deathbed of close relatives. As a rule, the soldiers never returned from their leaves. They would also run away without even bothering about identity papers.⁵³

According to eyewitnesses, those who illegally crossed the Afghan-Tajik border were usually provided with letters containing requests for help in the fight against communism or with a more official documents of a similar content that were certified by local *mullahs*. Since they could not get arms for free, smuggling was on the increase. Militants from Tajikistan and specialists on arms supply carried large sums in rubles and hard currency, gold, jewelry, spare parts for cars and tractors, irons, and electric razors. Usually all this was brought over inside car tires. In the Tajik villages along the border, procuring arms from Afghanistan became a profitable business. It was also quite safe because the Dushanbe authorities, supporting the opposition at that time, did not take any measures against the captured deserters. Not a single one of them was brought to justice.

The defeat of the opposition in Tajikistan, which had its strongholds in the southern regions and in the Gorno-Badakhshan Autonomous District, again focused attention on the border problem. After the opposition fighters had left for the mountains, their families, fearing reprisals, rushed to the Afghan border. In the Panj River sector, between 70,000 and 90,000 refugees had gathered. About 50,000 managed to cross into Afghanistan. The new Tajik government attempted to cut off access routes to the remaining refugees, believing that otherwise, pockets of armed resistance would spring up in the border districts of this neighboring country. The border detachments were reinforced by troops from the Kulyab district loyal to the government.

The Tajik conflict acquired new international dimensions in the spring of 1993. Armed groups of opposition supported by some regular Afghan forces began to attack the frontier and Russian border detachments. The military response to these units made the situation in Afghanistan very tense. Since Russia and Afghanistan have taken sides in the conflict, their role in the settlement has drastically increased. At the same time Uzbekistan has also preserved its influence upon the events in Tajikistan.

The Afghan government showed acknowledgment of Uzbekistan's special role when diplomatic relations were established in October 1992 between Kabul and Tashkent.⁵⁴ The acting president of Afghanistan at that time, Burkhanuddin Rabbani, paid a visit to Tashkent. Some news agencies al-

leged that the visit had been initiated by the Afghan side. There President Rabbani gave assurances that he would take every possible measure to stop the flow of arms and military equipment from Afghanistan into Tajikistan.⁵⁵

The complicated situation in Afghanistan, a country torn by civil war, nevertheless does not diminish its geostrategic importance to the entire region. In particular, it can still serve as a connecting link between Central Asia and Pakistan. It was no coincidence that one of the topics discussed in Tashkent was the construction of a highway across Afghanistan linking the city of Termez with the Pakistani port of Karachi.

Pakistan

This state has not had any significant experience in its relations with the former Soviet Union in general and with its Central Asian republics in particular. In the bipolar political world, the Soviet leadership had been focusing on India. But now the Pakistani government is trying to make up for missed opportunities. Islamabad has been at work on a series of proposals concerning the development of relations with the states of Central Asia in economic, financial, and technological areas.

Despite its relatively limited financial capabilities, by the end of 1991 Pakistan had offered credits and humanitarian aid to the Muslim republics. "The supplier's credits of \$10 million offered to each of six republics were found to be considerably short of their needs or expectations, and in the case of Uzbekistan, the figure was raised to \$30 million."⁵⁶

The persistent attempts of some influential forces in Pakistan to emphasize the Islamic aspects of cooperation have not been met with any favorable response in Central Asia, especially considering the events in Tajikistan. Because of this, Pakistan is paying more attention to the economic side of its relations with the Muslim republics, the more so since Islamabad has considerable expertise in banking, management, and construction.

The new geopolitical situation contributes to Pakistan's growing interest in a settlement in Afghanistan. Increasingly important also becomes stabilization within the southern border regions of the former USSR. What still remains unclear is the extent of the Pakistani government's control over the actions of some fundamentalist groups within the country itself, as well as in Afghanistan, which pursue their own aims in the Tajik conflict.

Saudi Arabia

This kingdom has rather limited opportunities for developing a multifaceted relationship with the republics of Central Asia. This is due to the structure of the Saudi economy, concentrated on oil and gas production, as well as the related refining and chemical industries. Saudi companies are in no hurry to invest without sufficient guarantees.

The main conduit of Saudi influence has become the sphere of religion. The Saudi government eased the conditions of a pilgrimage to Mecca for Soviet Muslims and provided for a continuous flow of religious literature into the republics. For instance, in January 1992, 300,000 copies of the Koran in Kazakh were donated to Kazakhstan.⁵⁷ The Saudis have been organizing schools in these republics, under the auspices of mosques, for teaching Arabic. Success in learning is rewarded by a free journey to the holy sites of Islam.

Saudi Arabia has been particularly active in Tajikistan where Islamists were in a very strong position. Along with distributing copies of the Koran and organizing courses in Arabic, Saudi Arabia made a contribution of \$300,000 to the office of the Cadi,⁵⁸ which was supporting the Islamic Revival Party (IRP). Eyewitnesses claimed that Tajiks returning from the *hadj* had with them loads of literature that was later put to use by the IRP.

Destabilizing activities of certain fundamentalist forces in Saudi Arabia prompted the Uzbek president, Karimov, to deport seventy Saudi preachers from Uzbekistan in August 1992. They had been active mostly in the Fergana valley, where the Islamists' influence was strongest.

Israel

During the past several years, Israel's interest in developing relations with the Central Asian republics has markedly grown, for several reasons. One is that Tel Aviv is trying to preserve its strategic importance to the United States when its own role in the Middle East is changing. It also wishes to counteract or to balance the penetration of the Muslim countries into the former Soviet Muslim East. The Israeli government is interested in obtaining a place in this vast market.

The American administration and the Israeli government jointly decided to provide economic assistance to the Muslim republics, with Kazakhstan receiving \$400 million in 1993. The Israeli economics minister, at a meeting with representatives of the American administration, stressed that the United States would grant aid to Israel for the latter's economic support to Kazakhstan with the aim of countering Iran's influence in Central Asia.⁵⁹

Kazakhstan, however, can hardly be seen as easy prey for the fundamentalists, and Israel, in concentrating on the development of its relations with that country, is counting on obtaining economic dividends and a general increase in its influence. At the end of September 1992, the Kazakh government signed an agreement with an Israeli company on a wide-ranging economic collaboration totaling more than \$1 billion for construction of chemical plants, plans for drip irrigation, and reconstruction of hospitals. According to the newspaper *Haaretz*, Israel will soon become a major exporter to Kazakhstan.⁶⁰

Israeli firms have also been very active in Uzbekistan, Kyrgyzstan, and

some other republics. In January 1993 the president of Kyrgyzstan paid an official visit to Israel.

The wave of conflicts in the countries of the former Soviet Union has also affected Israel. For Tel Aviv a subject of major concern is the fate of the Jewish communities there. During the hostilities in Tajikistan, Israel arranged for the evacuation of Tajik Jews from Dushanbe to the Holy Land.⁶¹ In the context of the Armenian-Azeri conflict, Azerbaijan showed a marked interest in developing closer relations with Israel since Baku tends to the opinion that the Armenian diaspora in the United States and in France is able to exert pressure and to shape both public opinion and official thinking concerning the conflict around the Nagorno-Karabakh. Because of that, Azerbaijan tried to make use of Israel's influence in the West as a possible counterbalance to that of the Armenians.⁶² Moreover, Azerbaijan would like to cooperate with Israel in military matters. The *Haaretz* did mention that the republic had been receiving Stinger missiles and military communication systems from Israel; however, the accuracy of the information remains doubtful.⁶³

At present the Israeli government pays much attention to training specialists for work in the Muslim republics. They are recruited from Israeli Muslims since Tel Aviv believes that they could adapt more easily to the local conditions.

On the whole Israel's influence in the post-Soviet republics is still limited. Yet the very fact of its presence is important evidence of these republics' pragmatic approach in the field of foreign relations.

The appearance on the world stage of republics—inheritors of the former USSR—has brought about fundamental changes in the structure of international relations; the direction of this process seems rather unpredictable. The transitional stage has turned out to be quite unstable. It is accompanied by an intense interplay of outside forces using as leverage their ethnic and geographic proximity in order to establish their own influence, while the new leadership of the post-Soviet States of Central Asia and Transcaucasia has been displaying purely pragmatic considerations in their choice of foreign economic and political allies.

An important factor influencing the behavior of foreign partners should be seen in the conflicts within the former Soviet Union. The new geopolitical situation makes it easier to get involved here not only for the states; even their internal opposing factions can play a part in such conflicts. The latter circumstance contributes to the growing instability and becomes an obstacle to any attempts to contain conflicts.

At the same time, the emergence of independent countries out of a monolithic multinational state has encouraged the growth of ethno-nationalist and separatist tendencies immediately affecting the internal situation in the neighboring Asian countries.

For their part, these countries are trying to use this favorable state of affairs—the complexity and uncertainty of the transitional period—to build up their own zones of influence in the post-Soviet political zone. The appearance of such zones might have negative consequences for a stable development of the region, if the rivalry among the major states of Asia should be reflected in the relations among the Central Asian republics. Quite important here becomes the task of counteracting the attempts to monopolize contacts with the states of Central Asia and Transcaucasia, no matter from what kind of regime such attempts should come, secular or Islamic, pro- or anti-Western. Diversification of foreign political and economic contacts seems to be the best guarantee of a relatively quiet and peaceful entry of these republics into the international community.

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VI

Experience and Prospects for Settlement of Ethno-National Conflicts in Central Asia and Transcaucasia

VITALY V. NAUMKIN

Ethnic conflicts in the post-Soviet territories, with all their diversity of forms and ways of development, have some common characteristics. These conflicts, primarily armed clashes, threaten peace as well as regional and international stability, even if they are local in character. There is the possibility of regional powers being drawn into them, and—through diaspora and related ethnoses—also some states whose interests are not affected by the conflict. The sudden deterioration of the economic situation in the former USSR republics, waves of refugees, the worsening environmental problem, the possible proliferation of weapons: these and many other factors compel not only neighboring states but also the international community to search for ways of settling these conflicts, avoiding their escalation, and preventing the emergence of new ethno-national hotbeds.

SPECIFICS OF POST-SOVIET ETHNIC CONFLICTS AND THEIR SETTLEMENT

The settlement of conflicts in the former Soviet republics is impeded by the very nature of the post-Soviet territory itself, with vague state and legal status of some territories, spread of national emotions, absence of the traditions of democratic development, unrealistic boundaries, migration of ethnoses, as well as the settling of "historical scores," often by ethnoses (Armenians-Azerbaijanians, Georgians-Abkhazians, etc.). Ethnic conflicts on the post-Soviet territory were aimed at achieving purely local targets corresponding to the levels of confrontation: interstate (Armenia-Azerbaijan, but here it is also only one of the two yardsticks of the conflicts; its main core lay inside Azerbaijan); between centers and autonomous regions

(Moldova-Transnistria, Georgia-Southern Ossetia, Abkhazia, Azerbaijan-Nagorno-Karabakh); between two autonomous regions (Ossetia-Ingushetia); and internal (Tajikistan). There is no reason to distinguish intercommunity (confessional) conflicts; however, as a rule, ethno-linguistic or ethno-religious communities are opposing each other, and religious factors underlie many of such conflicts.

Prior to the disintegration of the USSR at the end of 1991, these conflicts could be regarded as internal. The emergence of state boundaries between the republics intensified ethnic confrontation, but, most of the conflicts under consideration occur within the setting of one polity. Christopher Mitchell points out two implications of such conflicts:

1. Protracted, deep-rooted conflicts occur within the territorial and jurisdictional boundaries of polities and are thus intranational; and
2. A common form of protracted conflicts are those involving ethno-linguistic communities (or ethno-nationalities) in contention with other such communities.¹

It is appropriate to recall Rupasinghe's views on parties to internationality conflicts that observable in them are dominating majority (Cyprus, Northern Ireland, the Sudan); majority dominating over many minorities (India, Ethiopia, Pakistan); separate domination in economic and political spheres (Malaysia); and multiple irredenta (Kurds, Macedonians).²

In this regard, it is possible to find a number of analogies that should, however, be supplemented by a mass of details, essentially changing the approach to the situation. Thus, in Abkhazia, fighting for autonomy, Abkhazians constituted only 18 percent of the population. However, the situation could not be explained without taking into consideration the fact that a considerable number of Abkhazians were forced to emigrate in the past and that a large part of the Georgian population settled there in the Soviet era. In Kazakhstan, the Kazakhs comprise only two-fifths of the population, but the fact that a lot of them consider the non-Kazakh population of the republic as colonists should not be ignored.

The Kurds turned out to be multiple irredenta, but until the end of 1991, they were an ethnos inhabiting the territory of one unitary state. Divisibility of certain peoples, for example, the Lezgins living on the territory lying on both sides of the boundary between Azerbaijan and Russia (Dagestan), was not a conflict-making factor before the disintegration of the unified state. There are numerous such examples.

The ethno-national determinant of all these conflicts was predetermined by the heritage of the Soviet past (infringement of national rights, deportations, tangled boundaries, etc.), including current problems (necessity of ethnic self-identification, searches for models of newly developed states, determination of the nature of relations with neighboring nationalities, etc.). According to Valery Tishkov, former chairman of the State Committee on

the Affairs of Nationalities, "ethno-nationalism itself became prominent as an alternative at the local level."³

Many of these conflicts formerly existed in a dormant or suppressed form and only recently became active. The transition of the republics to independent existence, grave economic crisis, the weakening of central power, and an upsurge of ethnic self-consciousness (often accompanied by the attacks of xenophobia) were the triggers.

The general crisis of the multinational states, especially those based on ethno-linguistic principles, coincided with the crisis of public systems (the USSR, Yugoslavia)⁴ and a global uprising of ethno-social emotions, could not but exert an impact on all units of dormant ethnic tension in the erstwhile USSR. It is quite likely that such "unassimilable identities," according to Rupasinghe, would cause new conflict situations.

These conflicts are distinguished by their intensity, from sporadic flashes of violence to full-scale military actions. The conflicts are also distinguished time-wise: from relatively short-lived to protracted, which as a rule are intensive. Mitchell mentioned "protracted intra-national conflicts, occurring and re-occurring between large, organized human aggregates (communities), usually involving organized physical violence as a strategy for pursuing interests and achieving goals."⁵

Attempts to solve ethno-national conflicts were determined by the level of confrontation, the extent of intensity, and the volume of threat for the third parties. Depending on this, the measures taken to abate the conflicts were effected at the local level (without interference by third parties), with the participation of outside agents. The parties involved in the settlement of the conflict could be represented by:

1. states and state bodies (governments, parliaments, armies, etc.),
2. political parties and public organizations,
3. ethnic communities and institutions representing their interests,
4. religious communities and religious organizations,
5. regional and international organizations.

In each case we could refer to both institutional and private mediation, including mediation by organizations and individuals.

One point of view concerning the conflicts that shook the world after the end of the cold war is that these new conflicts are free of ideology. But, a group of Russian ethno-politologists has referred to these ethnic conflicts as "conflicts of ideological doctrines."⁶ When speaking about these "ethno-ideological conflicts, the authors of this point of view have marked the escalation of the following types of conflicts:

- In connection with historically disputable territories, which any of the parties considers to be part of their historical motherland;

- concerning the administrative status of an ethnic territory, that is, claims about the right to become an autonomy or an independent state;
- ethno-demographic changes in some regions caused by an increase in the number of newcomers belonging to other ethnic groups;
- conflicts of ethno-territorial origin resulting from the deportations of various peoples of the USSR during the period 1937–1944.⁷

The authors believe that “all these varieties of ethno-ideological conflicts have a common feature”: the almost religious reverence—sometimes verging upon the irrational—that participants display toward so-called historical rights; to be more exact, it should be seen as substitution of a traditional and tribal right for the civil right. They have noticed the coming together of conflicts of emotions with conflicts of ideas; they have also discovered one more variety of internal conflict in the disintegrating USSR, the conflict of political institutions based not exclusively on ideological doctrines but on the force of political organizations as well: various parties, political blocs, and state institutions.⁸

This classification was put forward early in 1992, before some of the bloodiest conflicts. One important factor had been taken into consideration: the degree to which an ethnic group feels itself involved. On this depends the group’s ability to accept a compromise and its preparedness for negotiations.

Experience indicates that the characteristics of a conflict can change during its development, and one can find a point in such development that seems to be most favorable for the overall settlement. Some concepts worked out by regional conflict specialists seem to be applicable to ethnic conflicts as well, notwithstanding all the differences. In both cases one should distinguish between rapid and protracted conflicts; in either case the stalemate seems to be the decisive point.

When turning to the attitudes of a third party regarding such conflicts, one can distinguish the following ones:

1. indifferent;
2. passive involvement: help on reaching certain decisions;
3. active involvement: mediation for settling the conflict;
4. promoting: not just taking part in reaching a settlement but attempting to obtain a result using political means;
5. policing: direct military intervention with the aim of reaching a settlement through the use of force.⁹

These attitudes correspond to particular roles. Such situations have been sufficiently elucidated in the literature dealing with regional conflicts of the cold war period. Here one can refer the reader to the classification proposed

by William Zartman. Discussing the superpowers, he mentions five roles with two-dimensional differences for a dominating power: gendarme, ombudsman, umpire, crusader, bystander:

Crusader refers to a military intervention and occupation in a conflict in order not simply to remove the conflict but install a government in the intervenor's image that is designed to eliminate the problem. Gendarme refers to military intervention in the conflict on the side of "right," meaning generally on the side of one of the parties and usually on the side of an established government. Ombudsman refers to diplomatic intervention to seek a solution among conflicting claims all of which are judged more or less legitimate. Umpire refers to indirect intervention on the side of right through economic measures, financing fourth-party intervenors, providing military supplies, and supporting regional efforts and organizations. Bystander refers to a hands-off non-intervention of any sort, leaving the conflicting parties to work out their problems and even interdicting other regional intervention."¹⁰

However, the experience obtained from settling regional conflicts cannot be applied in full measure to conflicts discussed here. First, since the end of the cold war, regional and newly emerging ethnic conflicts are no longer inextricably bound with superpower rivalry, and no other rivalry has replaced the Soviet-American—or, more generally, East-West—confrontation; one may wonder if the North-South confrontation will replace it.

Second, the role of regional and international organizations is on the increase; because of this—and because of the general change in the international situation—even states aspiring to the role of gendarme in a conflict have to obtain an international mandate. The roles of the Allied forces during the Gulf conflict and the role played by the U.S. and other troops in the Somali crisis, have marked the way to a new order, without excluding, however, the use of active means—and military ones as well. Here we can adduce the opinion of the Egyptian politologist Ali Dessouki who observed at the Cairo Symposium in spring 1992 that the actions of the Allied forces in the 1991 Gulf War again had stressed the world role of the country—the United States—having necessary military power.

Third, the conflicts taking place within the post-Soviet zone differ from other regional and internal conflicts. In some cases, they are developing within the borders of the CIS, which may be considered a regional organization now, but there are instances when the conflicts have a direct impact on the CIS countries because of common borders. Other important factors have a role to play, including the presence of ethnic minorities and common communications and power systems. This interdependence of all the republics of the former USSR—perhaps excluding the Baltic states, where the Russian population, nevertheless, remains an important factor—contributes to their high degree of involvement in any of such conflicts.

In order to clarify the situation generated by the conflicts, one should establish the motives and the corresponding aims of the sides taking part

in the conflict settlement. Their actions can be motivated by the following reasons:

- protection of the interests of their fellow citizens;
- protection of the interests of ethnically related groups;
- protection of the interests of their coreligionists;
- protection of their own economic interests (property, markets for raw materials of strategic importance, communication lines, etc.);
- concern for their own security (elimination of the source of a conflict threatening to overrun into one's own territory, threatening one's borders, etc.);
- prevention of the use of a conflict situation by other parties for hostile action or for interference;
- prevention of population migrations constituting a threat to one's own interests;
- widening one's own influence;
- environmental security;
- securing the implementation of bilateral, multilateral (regional), or international obligations;
- securing the interests of one's allies;
- securing the interests of the international community (which is usually reflected in the mandate provided by international and regional organizations).

But true motives are often obscured and, instead, motives are put forward that seem more acceptable to the international community or to the participants of a conflict.

One should also consider the attitudes of the mediating parties to the participants of a conflict. These can be classified in the following way:

1. support to a party in the conflict (and aiming to defeat the opposing party (parties));
2. support to a group of conflicting parties (and aiming to defeat the opposing group);
3. trying to reconcile all the parties (establishing civil peace, creation of a coalition government, etc.);
4. assisting new force(s) to acquire power;
5. indifference;
6. support for a particular figure (or a group of them) not linked with support for or opposition to a certain side, a party, or a political force. Such an attitude can be conditioned by exclusively personal, confessional, ethnic, clannish, or corporate considerations.

The degree or nature of involvement of third parties depends largely on the resources of the party, whose actions always are limited by certain

factors. The parties involved possess different financial, diplomatic, or military resources. Very important is the regional and international prestige of the mediator; a prospective mediator can be unacceptable to each or to one of the opposing parties. For instance, Turkey, while pretending to a mediating role in the conflict between Armenia and Azerbaijan, is not considered by the people of both Armenia and the Nagorno-Karabakh to be an honest broker, and Ankara's attempts have proved to be quite ineffective. At the same time the Armenian leadership has not rejected Turkey's offers for mediation outright; it has even asked Ankara for assistance. More acceptable to both parties could be Iran, but its involvement concerns the West; putting it differently, Iran's international prestige is not sufficiently high for its mission to be successful despite the rather effective steps undertaken by Iranian diplomats. Quite important also is experience in conflict control. A number of countries, including European ones, display an obvious lack here. Also necessary is the ability to undertake such actions, as well as possession of useful political contacts and channels of influence. Russia seems to have most of these, but it is often faced with one limitation: the distrust displayed by both parties, which fear that behind its attempts at reaching a settlement might lurk the neo-imperialist pretensions of the conservatives in the Russian establishment. The latter are also suspected of creating difficulties for the democratic government by their manifestly awkward actions in the hot points of the post-Soviet territory. Such actions could also make the situation explosive.

Some of the general features of ethnic and national conflicts discussed here, as well as the experience to be gained from attempts at their settlement, can be illustrated by examples from a number of the most intense and protracted conflicts.

NAGORNO-KARABAKH: ABORTIVE ATTEMPTS TO SOLVE A PROTRACTED CONFLICT

The conflict between Armenians and Azerbaijanis (AAC) has become one of the longest, bloodiest, fiercest, and the most destructive conflicts within the post-Soviet geographic continuum. From the very beginning, various forces have been engaged in finding a solution. First, the former Soviet leadership tried to introduce emergency rule in Nagorno-Karabakh, when both republics were still part of the USSR; the latest efforts are being undertaken by the international community within the CSCE framework.

The AAC is a case characterized by pronounced ethnic and national components, by identities highly resistant to assimilation, by a powerfully negative historical background, and by an unfavorable environment. The conflict entered its decisive phase during the years 1988–1989. In 1991 the AAC reached the local war stage when third parties began to be sought as mediators.

Russia was the first to take upon itself the role of mediator; then it was

Russia with Kazakhstan (i.e., Presidents Yeltsin and Nazarbayev), Iran, and Turkey. At first their mediatory efforts seemed to bring about results, but, then agreements would not be carried out, and carefully forged links would be broken as soon as the mediators ceased intense diplomatic activity in the region. Most important, the sides of the conflict failed to show any progress at all because neither would budge from its position and neither would display any desire for a compromise.

These early efforts also displayed the mediators' weaknesses. Russia was not sufficiently trusted by the opposing parties since its impartiality was doubted. This requirement was even less applicable to Turkey, since its attitude seemed to the Armenians to be biased in favor of Azerbaijan. The Armenian side saw Iran in a more favorable light, yet all parties were aware of its limited capabilities.

The year 1992 was one of decisive bloody battles. The AAC reached a stage of new escalation when modern, heavy weapons started to be used. At the same time the number of prospective mediators grew; drawn in were the CIS, the CSCE, and the UN. Nor did individual states stop their mediatory attempts; the most active of them was Kazakhstan.

In March 1992, after a cease-fire agreement was broken immediately, France called for a convention, under CSCE auspices, of an international conference of foreign affairs ministers concerning the settlement of the Karabakh crisis. It was one of the many proposals put forward by European states trying to assume a more active role in a settlement using the CSCE.

In the spring of 1992, several CSCE members formed a group to work out a package of joint initiatives for the AAC settlement. On April 27 two groups of experts arrived at Baku and Yerevan carrying the mandate of the chairman of the foreign ministers of the CSCE council. The main obstacle was the two republics' diametrical attitudes toward a Karabakh solution. Yerevan insisted upon the Karabakh people's right to self-determination, thus admitting possible separation from Azerbaijan, but Baku called for a strict adherence to the principle of the inviolability of borders. When mediation became even more intensive, much importance was assumed by the problem of the Nagorno-Karabakh representatives in the negotiation process. Baku claimed that only Armenia and Azerbaijan were parties to the conflict; its claims became even more insistent after Armenian troops—in May—occupied the Lachin corridor linking Armenia with Karabakh; it was considered an open violation of Azerbaijan's sovereign status. Yerevan's opposition assumed that the opposition to Baku was coming not from Armenia but from the Nagorno-Karabakh, while the occupation of the corridor had been undertaken for alleged humanitarian reasons, that is, to run the Azerbaijanian blockade of the enclave. On May 18 the Armenian Defense Ministry claimed that Lachin had been captured by detachments of the local Kurds.

The regular meeting of CSCE foreign affairs ministers in Rome with the

ministers of the states involved in the AAC faced enormous obstacles, when the parties were supposed to be preparing for the Minsk conference on the Upper Karabakh. The conflict continued to escalate, and the Karabakh representation was fiercely disputed. Both sides claimed that the opposition had been using banned arms and methods of warfare. The Azerbaijan Ministry of Defense alleged Armenia had used chemical weapons.¹¹ Everybody was aware that both parties were far from a settlement. The attitude of Azerbaijanians towards Armenians of Karabakh was based on vengeance: since the Azeris had been driven out of Armenia, the remaining Armenians should leave Karabakh, that is, Azerbaijan.

At the same time, Russian diplomats were taking certain steps. Early in April Russia's foreign affairs minister, Andrey Kozyrev, visited Azerbaijan, Armenia, and the Nagorno-Karabakh. But this visit served only to emphasize Moscow's limited capability of effectively coping with the AAC. It was reported that Russia was trying to prevent the flow of arms from the CIS states into this zone as well as to stop its two armies in Azerbaijan and in Armenia from becoming involved in the hostilities. Russia also hoped to play a mediatory role.

All of these peacemaking efforts of the USSR and, later, of the CIS were doomed to failure since their leaders were not trusted by their respective peoples: they were seen as being too closely linked to the Soviet communist system.

The United States also started to pay attention to the AAC and expressed anxiety over the escalating hostilities. In March 1992, following a request of Suleiman Demirel (acting under the influence of the Azerbaijani leaders), President George Bush made a direct appeal to both sides for an immediate cease-fire in the Nagorno-Karabakh.

Armenia had great hope that the Armenian diaspora, in the West and the Middle East, would help the mother country solve its financial and economic problems and the AAC settlement; in the latter case, the diaspora has been expected to secure the support of the public opinion of the Christian West. At the end of 1991 Armenia's new minister of foreign affairs became a U.S. citizen and was expected to solve the tasks. Certainly, the new state needed the expertise and contacts of the Armenian diaspora. However, as far as can be gathered, the minister's personal attitude, as well as his background, was in sharp contrast with the more flexible and compromise-seeking position of the president and the majority of the government. It seems likely that political figures with local backgrounds felt a greater responsibility for the republic's survival and had a far better understanding of the political situation. It has since become known that the foreign minister demanded that Yerevan always remember the genocide of 1915 while normalizing its relations with Ankara; in its turn, Turkey should have admitted its responsibility and denounced that crime. He was also in favor of Armenia's recognition of the Nagorno-Karabakh's independence. But the president of

Armenia was apparently justified that such a stance would complicate Armenia's position in the AAC, and the minister had to resign in mid-October 1992. In this way it became clear that the diaspora would not play the role expected of it.

In June 1992 the leader of the Popular Front, Abulfaz Elchibei, was elected president of Azerbaijan. His declared support for a secular and democratic state seemed to indicate his pro-Western leanings and his attempts to secure Western support for Azerbaijan's position. An important success for the country was the international community's recognition of the republic's territorial integrity. The Minsk and, later, the Rome meetings (within the CSCE framework) at first generated hope, yet they were unable to effect a settlement.

Let us look in more detail at certain events of the second half of 1992; the analysis will provide a better understanding of the AAC dynamics and the failure of attempts to solve it.

By August, after the majority of the participants of these meetings (United States, Italy, Russia, France, and Germany) had denounced the June events at Mardakert and Shaumyan as well as bombing raids on the Nagorno-Karabakh, the Armenian delegation returned to the conference table. A joint agreement on a cease-fire was being discussed; its draft had been presented by eight countries of the CSCE: Germany, the United States, Belorussia, France, Italy, Russia, Czechoslovakia, and Sweden.

A formula guaranteeing the participation of the Nagorno-Karabakh Republic in the talks had been prepared and agreed upon: elected representatives of the Nagorno-Karabakh were to represent the administration, with other representatives taking part on behalf of various ethnic groups of the population (Armenians, Azerbaijanis, Russians, Greeks). But when the representative of the Nagorno-Karabakh took the floor, the delegation of Azerbaijan and Turkey left the conference; they opposed his speech because to them it meant official recognition of the Nagorno-Karabakh. They returned when they were assured that their protest would be taken into consideration during the next meeting.

It soon became clear that neither of the parties to the conflict was prepared to make concessions. That round was interrupted on August 4 when the Armenian delegation and that of the Nagorno-Karabakh left the conference protesting the actions of Italy, the chairing country. Both delegations alleged that Italy had not met its obligations toward the elected representatives of the Nagorno-Karabakh. The Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs rejected their protests and reminded them that the decision concerning the status of the Nagorno-Karabakh delegation had been adopted by the CSCE Council of Ministers back in March, and the demands for upgrading it were baseless. The meeting, however, could not resume its sessions.

The Russian Foreign Affairs Ministry again proposed to mediate. It declared that populated areas in both republics were frequently under heavy

fire, and many of them were villages with a predominantly Russian population. On August 5 Kozyrev discussed with Ovannisian the possibility of the UN, CSCE, and CIS troop involvement.

At a press conference Kozyrev declared that Russian peace-keeping forces should be sent to Karabakh under UN auspices. He also suggested a date for a tripartite meeting in a town in the south of Russia. Azerbaijan's attitude toward the proposal seemed extremely reserved since Kozyrev had linked the solution of the AAC with the introduction of the CIS peace forces while Azerbaijan had always raised objections against it.

Then a new proposal of Nazarbayev met with quick approval. He suggested that the Armenian and Azerbaijan foreign ministers meet with their Kazakhstan opposite number in Alma-Ata. The August 27 meeting was seen as a decisive step toward a settlement. Answering a question about Russia's nonparticipation in the talks, the Kazakh president replied that the AAC concerned all the members of the CIS but the number of initiatives should be limited while Kazakhstan's impartiality was not doubted by Baku or Yerevan. Nazarbayev emphasized the top-priority tasks: an immediate cease-fire, an end to the economic blockade, and renewal of fuel and power supplies. He was also prepared to submit the problem of the Nagorno-Karabakh settlement at the forthcoming session of the UN General Assembly. A trilateral experts' group was to make a survey of the conflict zone and prepare the ground for a CSCE delegation visit not earlier than the beginning of 1993.

Nazarbayev's proposals were intended as a kind of intermediate solution, an opening for a broad process with international involvement. His suggestions were quite different from those of other mediators with their promises of a final settlement. Some of the states quite clearly intended their mediatory role to be a boost for their own international status; such was Iran's intention.

Before the meeting, Nazarbayev referred to his previous joint attempt (with Boris Yeltsin) at mediation as well as those of Rome and Ankara (Tehran's efforts were passed over in silence). "Still, all the efforts up till now have been in vain," said the president.¹² But the same was the lot of the Alma-Ata declaration signed by eleven heads of states on December 21, 1991, also approved by the presidents of Armenia and Azerbaijan.

Various opposition forces tried to use the AAC for their own ends in the struggle for power. They would criticize their government's actions and put forward their own suggestions. A correspondent of the Karabakh news agency alleged that a representative of the social-democrat party of Azerbaijan had proposed in a telephone interview an immediate and unilateral stop to the hostilities, along with an economic agreement between Azerbaijan and the Nagorno-Karabakh. Quite likely, it was a piece of intentioned misinformation.

The events in the Nagorno-Karabakh area that had started a few days

before the Alma-Ata meeting caused some observers to draw a parallel between them and the course of the Vietnam War. They feared the escalation phase would be followed by a full-scale war using modern weapons. Yerevan called for UN observers to be sent to the Nagorno-Karabakh for talks on a "cease-fire as the first step towards a settlement." The second step should consist of the deployment of peacekeeping forces around the Nagorno-Karabakh area and along the Armenian-Azerbaijani common border.¹³ Armenia consented to a UN, CSCE, or any other international sponsorship. In turn, the Karabakh administration accused the international community of criminal indifference, adding that Russia's leadership was largely to blame for handing over to Azerbaijan dozens of modern military planes.

Just before the Alma-Ata meeting, Mario Rafaelli, the chairman of the Minsk conference on Karabakh, paid a visit to Yerevan. He informed President Ter-Petrossyan on Baku's views of possible ways to a settlement; the prerequisite was to be a joint agreement about the observers reached by Armenia and Azerbaijan. But the Armenian president insisted upon talks on this subject to be held exclusively by the representation of Azerbaijan and the Nagorno-Karabakh.

The results of the meeting seemed to be reassuring. It was announced that hostilities between both states had been stopped on September 1 as part of the agreement on a sixty-day cease-fire. President Nazarbayev called for an immediate conference of the trilateral work group in order to prepare documents necessary for a meeting of the three presidents. However, quite soon it became obvious that such optimism had been baseless, and the agreement was broken almost at once. It also became clear that there was no hope for a cease-fire along the Armenia-Azerbaijan border while the war was still raging in the Nagorno-Karabakh. Various districts in Armenia again came under fire, and the Karabakh self-defense forces continued their military operations. In the meantime, the Nagorno-Karabakh Republic proclaimed its independence on September 2. In spite of the signing of agreements, both sides used any pretext to continue military operations: in one instance, for the consolidation of success, in another in order to take revenge for defeats; for the restoration of the balance of forces and for the liberation of occupied territories or, on the contrary, for the sake of capturing new territories and exerting military pressure. Moreover, the Azerbaijanis' unwillingness to consider Stepanakert as an equal in the negotiations was an insurmountable obstacle for a political settlement. This problem stressed once again that the issue of representation in the negotiations was the major obstacle to reaching a settlement.

At the time, the speaker of the parliament, Issa Gambarov, announced at a press conference in Baku that the Karabakh war would end in 1992. But the way it would end depended on the Armenian side. The protocol signed by the ministers envisaged a full cease-fire along the entire border beginning on September 15. The details should have been worked out at

the Rome meeting of the CSCE Minsk group, but correspondents reported Yerevan's opinion that the Azerbaijani representatives had no authority for holding official negotiations and, consequently, that meeting should be treated as an informal talk. Baku reported an Armenian attempt to get about forty trucks with arms and military personnel through the Lachin corridor for operations in Karabakh. However, President Ter-Petrosyan said that he was not expecting any reduction in the tension between the two republics unless there was stabilization on the Karabakh front.

Yerevan and Baku started their mutual accusations yet again. The Azerbaijani president stressed the need for UN and CSCE sanctions against Armenia, which was not "displaying any respect for the peacemaking efforts of the UN as well as to the peace initiatives of the Kazakhstan president." The conclusion was that either Armenia was using the negotiations as a cover for further escalation of military operations or that it was unable to control the Armenian detachments' "committing acts of aggression against the territory of Azerbaijan."

When the Azerbaijani foreign minister visited Turkey, his Turkish counterpart declared that the strong-arm policies of Armenia would bring it no results: "Turkey sees exclusively a political solution of the conflict within a CSCE framework."¹⁴

For his part, Gasymov called for a means (provided by the CSCE) to restrain the aggressor, Armenia, which persisted in its refusal to recognize the Nagorno-Karabakh as part of Azerbaijan's territory.

The acting chairman of the Nagorno-Karabakh Supreme Soviet, Georg Petrossyan, during his U.S. visit in November 1992, disputed Gambarov's views and asserted that war would continue unless Baku renounced its hopes for a military suppression of Karabakh. The Karabakh leader believed that the Azerbaijanis had in mind only a military solution.

The development of the AAC has also shown the importance of other ethnic minorities, even those not directly involved in the conflict. Armenia is known to have counted on the support of the Kurdish minority in the eastern districts of Azerbaijan bordering on Armenia. Baku was very worried by the growth of nationalism among the Kurds as well as other groups: the Lezghinians in the north and the Talysh in the south. In September the president of Azerbaijan had given orders to resettle about 105,000 Azerbaijani refugees from the Nagorno-Karabakh in the regions bordering on Dagestan and inhabited mainly by the Lezghinians. This led to a sharp increase in the level of tension since the native population believed this to be a scheme to change the ethno-demographic situation in the region; this was also aggravated by the absence of internal autonomy. The Lezghin language had not been taught at school but, at the same time, their young men were being called up into the army on a massive scale.

The importance of purely economic factors could be clearly seen in the development of the AAC. The repeated stress laid upon the restoration of

communication lines and lifting of the blockade was making evident that the opposing sides were using economic warfare. The same means were playing an important role in the Georgia-Abkhazia conflict, and fierce battles have been fought for the control of railroads, airports, and seaports. Along with taking of hostages and deportations, such methods have become common.

The world community, and particularly countries close to the states involved in the conflict, have hoped that involvement in regional alliances would elicit cooperation, but this seems not to have happened. Although both Armenia and Azerbaijan have signed the treaty on economic cooperation among countries of the Black Sea region, the two republics have not established any bilateral relations within this treaty's framework.

The most serious obstacle for reaching a solution is mutual hatred.

Despite the common belief that the war may die out because of the exhaustion of each side's military resources, the local military believe that the amount of amassed weaponry will be sufficient for military operations for a long time to come.

Since Azerbaijan has been blockading Armenia, suffering from a dearth of food and fuel, Yerevan decided to use as a lever its own blockade of the Azerbaijani enclave of the Nakhichevan Autonomous Republic; the latter's life-line to the republic goes through the Megri corridor. The Orient-Media news agency reported in October 1992 that during talks between Iran and Azerbaijan, a project was agreed upon; a new railroad branch, 65 km long, should be constructed, linking Azerbaijan with Nakhichevan through Iranian territory. Some observers stressed that completion of the project would deprive Armenia of an instrument of pressure on "Aliyev's enclave" (named after Geidar Aliyev, the former communist leader and the present chairman of the Nakhichevan Supreme Soviet); on the other hand, Iran would obtain its own instrument for pressuring Baku. The protocol, signed by Iran and Azerbaijan on October 12, provided for Tehran's delivery to Nakhichevan of 100,000 tons of oil, 90,000 tons of coal, and 10,000 tons of grain.¹⁵

There has not been a lack of nontraditional approaches to the solution of the AAC. At the end of April, just before the fall of Shusha and Lachin, rumors originating in Cyprus alleged that some informal talks had taken place there. Among the participants were the United States, Russia, and Greece, along with Armenia and Azerbaijan. The reported results concerned the opening up of the Lachin corridor in exchange for the opening of the corridor running through Megri. Dj. Nuriev, the chairman of an Azerbaijani parliamentary commission, claimed that the author of the plan was the United States since "Azerbaijan could play a key role in the US policy towards the Middle East and Central Asia." According to Nuriev, "Azerbaijan can be used by the U.S. in its political games against Russia and the other neighboring countries. When the Megri corridor is opened, the US will acquire a direct access to Azerbaijan through Turkey since the latter is

a member of the NATO.”¹⁶ In this deputy’s opinion, voiced at a Milli-Majlis session, such an agreement should be considered “an anti-Azerbaijani provocation” because it was intended to aggravate relations between Turkey and Azerbaijan, to destabilize the latter’s internal situation, to aggravate relations between the government and the opposition, and even to lead to violent overthrow of the administration. “The Armenian declaration of June 9 in Lachin of the establishment of a Kurdish state should be seen as part and parcel of this whole provocative scheme.” He maintained that such an exchange was heavily biased since Nakhichevan was part of Azerbaijan, while the existence of the Lachin corridor could only mean an effective union between Armenia and Nagorno-Karabakh.

A preliminary report presented at the conference “Peace and Conflict in Emergent States: The Transcaucasus” (sponsored by the USIP in cooperation with the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace) contained such alternative variants for a solution.

Thomas Goltz, a journalist residing in Baku, has come to the conclusion that the only solution for Azerbaijan is to cede the Nagorno-Karabakh to Armenia in exchange for the Armenian territory lying between the province of Nakhichevan and the main part of Azerbaijan. Both steps are politically impossible for the respective governments. Kenneth M. Jensen, director of the Institute of Peace Research and Studies Program, also agreed that the only apparent way to peace in the Nagorno-Karabakh would be a swap of territory or population between Armenia and Azerbaijan; at the same time he warned that such an exchange would constitute “an outrageous violation of every norm in international relations.”

A similar suggestion concerning an exchange of territories was also made by Paul Goble, an American expert on this region. His ideas as to the possible solution of the Karabakh problem were rejected outright in Armenia; the result of the swap would mean that this country would obtain rights over part of the land it had claimed as its own but would lose another part of the same, that is, the Azeri-Nakhichevan corridor. It would lose part of its territory and be deprived of its border with Iran, an important lifeline to the outside world. This compromise would also be unacceptable to Azerbaijan as recognizing the Armenian claims upon Karabakh. Although the proposals of Goltz and Goble did not contain any specific recommendations, they could have been used as a basis for a solution in a calmer atmosphere. These proposals also met with objections elsewhere. Some Armenian politicians criticized Galina Starovoitova, an adviser to the president of Russia and a former member of the USSR Supreme Soviet representing the Nagorno-Karabakh, for her alleged support for “the Goble plan.”

Despite its accusations against Turkey for its prejudiced views, Yerevan did not cease in its attempts to normalize the relations between the two states. On September 23 a Turkish diplomatic mission arrived in Yerevan, headed by the deputy minister of foreign affairs. The Armenian deputy

foreign minister, A. Kirakosseyan, declared that his country was ready to normalize relations, but it was baffled by Ankara's openly pro-Azerbaijani stance in the Karabakh conflict. In particular, this stance had been evidenced by Ankara's behavior at the Rome CSCE consultations as well as in the case when transport planes carrying humanitarian aid to Armenia were searched by Turkish authorities. Yerevan asked Turkey for a grain loan, though the problems in their relations had been quite numerous.

While Baku increasingly oriented itself to the West, Yerevan did not forget about the CIS, to which it belonged. Thus, Ovanisyan proposed to the ministers of all CIS countries and Georgia that they come to Armenia to learn about the situation on the spot. The same proposal was made to the ministers of foreign affairs of thirty-five states of Europe, Asia, and America. Ovanisyan asked them to denounce Azerbaijan's aggression against the Nagorno-Karabakh region and use appropriate sanctions. The appeal for sanctions was the most widely used motive in the arsenal of diplomatic means of the conflict participants.

The unwillingness of the sides to compromise was felt by the mediators, who tried to achieve progress in the negotiations. Unexpected turns, however, did occur sometimes. On September 25, the delegations of military experts of Armenia and Azerbaijan, with the mediation of the Russian military, drafted a protocol that was an important step forward in the position of Baku. Yerevan's position did not change, but Baku made an unexpected concession by agreeing to a cease-fire in Nagorno-Karabakh irrespective of whether Armenia withdrew its troops from Lachin and Shusha. In Alma-Ata, the minister of foreign affairs of Azerbaijan declared that the situation in Nagorno-Karabakh was the internal affair of his republic, and he could speak only of a settlement on the border with Armenia. In his letter to Rafaelli, President Elchibei linked the possibility of a cease-fire in the NKR with the withdrawal of the Armenian expeditionary corps from Shusha and Lachin, which made progress impossible at the Rome consultations on September 7–10 under the auspices of CSCE. Was it not one of the reasons for the change of position? Another reason was believed to be the pressure exerted on Azerbaijan by the West, which began to consider freezing aid to the republic.

In trying to achieve maximum balance in its relations with the conflicting sides, Russia was taking steps to improve relations with Azerbaijan, which nevertheless was unwilling to join the CIS. On October 12, a bilateral treaty on economic cooperation and security between Russian and Azerbaijan was signed in the Kremlin. Describing relations with Armenia after the signing of the treaty, President Elchibei pointed out that "the reactionary forces" prevented Ter-Petrosyan "from making steps towards peaceful settlement," naming as such the party of Dashnaksutyun. Elchibei confirmed that he saw the settlement of the Karabakh conflict only within the bounds of the CSCE and assigned an auxiliary role to the mediators. He rejected the

peacemaking role of the CIS forces on the grounds that Azerbaijan was not a member of the CIS. Although the Rome conference did not lead even to a cease-fire, Elchibei expressed optimism that in a year or two the conflict would come to an end.

Meanwhile, the Armenian-Azerbaijan conflict was increasingly becoming an object of attention of the United Nations as well. On October 27, the UN Security Council received a statement emphasizing the necessity to convene the Minsk conference of the CSCE on Karabakh, to cease all military operations and the blockade, and to start political consultations. Ter-Petrosyan sent a message to the UN secretary general and to the chairman of the UN Security Council, in which he welcomed the Security Council statement on the situation in Nagorno-Karabakh and said that the Armenian side was ready to settle the conflict by political means and to cease fire without any preliminary conditions. The representative of Armenia at the UNO appraised the Security Council statement as an advance on the way to peaceful solution of the conflict.

Azerbaijan, however, did not want the Lachin corridor to remain in the hands of Armenia and feared that the truce could be used by Armenia to supply Karabakh with arms and ammunition. Therefore, the initiative of the UN Security Council served to intensify military actions by the Azerbaijan side. The NKR self-defense units also became more active. Armenia, on the other hand, having approved the UN Security Council statement, began forming a national army.

The end of 1992 did not bring changes in the positions of the sides regarding the possible role of the CSCE. D. Shakhnazaryan, the representative of the Armenian president attending the December 14–15 CSCE Stockholm conference, declared that the contending sides could not today expect much from the meeting. Once again the December conference, as Shakhnazaryan reported, made no decision on the Karabakh problem except the general recommendation to continue preparing for the Minsk conference. No agreement was achieved on the main issue: the status of CSCE observers in the area of the conflict.

Armenia insisted that Azerbaijan opposed peaceful settlement, hoping for military victory, deportation of the Karabakh army, and the seizure of its territory. Yerevan believes that Nagorno-Karabakh already exists as an independent military and political entity, and this reality must be reckoned with. Yerevan accused Azerbaijan and Turkey because their delegations rejected an item it proposed of the hopelessness of military solution and because of the absence of an alternative to peaceful means.¹⁷

The approval by the U.S. Congress of an amendment to the bill on the encouragement of freedom, refusing humanitarian aid to Azerbaijan until it ends "political blockade" against Nagorno-Karabakh, evoked a sharp reaction in Baku. It was hoped in the Azerbaijan capital that the orientation to the United States and the rest of the West proclaimed by Elchibei and

the accusations of the violation of human rights against the Iranian regime would help him to receive Washington's support. It was not expected that President Clinton could criticize the Azerbaijan position with respect to the Karabakh conflict. Elchibei told journalists that deterioration of American-Azerbaijan relations would not be in the United States' strategic interests, but the possibility is not excluded that Baku may slam the door. And the speaker of the parliament, Gambarov, said at a press conference on November 12: "When they see that they cannot receive support from the West and the USA, the Azerbaijan people may turn to the Islamic states." It was an obvious attempt to use the threat of departure from the secularist course to exert pressure on the West.

At the beginning of 1993, Presidents Bush and Yeltsin sent messages to the presidents of the two republics. In reply Elchibei stressed that conditions for negotiation had not been created because Armenia refused to make concessions. The message said that the Armenian parliament still had not cancelled "the decision on the annexation of Nagorno-Karabakh although the world community had recognized that territory as an inalienable part of Azerbaijan." Thus Baku once again laid the blame on Yerevan for lack of progress in the negotiations. Yerevan was also charged with violations of signed agreements. And the demand for sanctions was made again. In his interview with the Turan agency, Minister of Foreign Affairs T. Gasymov stated that "the USA, Russia and Turkey must act as legal guarantors of implementation of the agreements achieved before the negotiation process begins." In his opinion, the three states could jointly work out a mechanism for applying sanctions against the side unilaterally violating the obligations it had assumed.

Yerevan, in its turn, was pouring accusations on Baku. On January 10, after the talks of Yeltsin and Ter-Petrosyan in Moscow, the press secretary of the Armenian president, R. Shugaryan, said: "Either Baku does not have a comprehensible idea of how to resolve the Karabakh problem, or complete anarchy reigns there." Representatives of the Azerbaijan authorities called the statement "an insult."

Bickering went on between the two conflicting republics' defense ministries as well. V. Manukyan said in parliament that only continued military operations could compel Azerbaijan to begin talks. The statement made in reply by the Azerbaijan defense ministry asserted that this view testified to the "continuation of the Armenian government's aggressive policy." The scheduled meeting between representatives of the two countries' defense ministries did not take place because of fierce fighting.

Thus, the numerous attempts to achieve a breakthrough in the settlement or at least discontinuation of hostilities have not produced any results. Nevertheless, the sides' positions and moods have been moderating. For example, public opinion in Azerbaijan has departed from its extremist de-

mand to drive the Armenians out of Karabakh. For its part, Armenia seems to be more inclined to recognize Azerbaijan's sovereignty over Karabakh, within the framework of a peace settlement. Azerbaijan is apparently ready to agree to the necessity of restoring the autonomy of the Nagorno-Karabakh region abolished by Baku and of providing the necessary guarantees to the Armenians residing within its territory. Armenian member of parliament A. Bleyan called for talks without go-betweens and without any preconditions, which proves that serious changes have taken place in the nation's public opinion. R. Guseinov, deputy plenipotentiary of Azerbaijan in Moscow, pointed out that public opinion in his republic was possibly ready to discuss even demilitarization of Nagorno-Karabakh.

Nineteen ninety-three was a year of dramatic events for the AAC conflict countries. Further escalation of the conflict was manifested in the seizure by the Armenian troops of new Azeri territories (the Kelbajar district and inhabited localities of Nagorno-Karabakh), with the Azeri side asserting, as previously, that Armenia's regular army took part in the hostilities, whereas Yerevan insisted that all operations were conducted exclusively by the Karabakh volunteer units. All international peace-making efforts remained futile. No changes for the better of any importance were brought about by the joint American-Russian-Turkish initiative in the summer of 1993.

Against a background of military defeats, increasing difficulties and growing inner political contradictions, President Elchibei and the Popular Front government fell. Presidential duties began to be performed by the Nakhichevan leader Geidar Aliyev, one of the former party executives and statesmen of the USSR, who on October 3, 1993 was elected president of Azerbaijan by an absolute majority vote. Aliyev's coming to power was associated with the reorientation of the republic from Ankara to Moscow, which was almost openly admitted by the Azeri leader himself. One of the most important steps made by the new administration was the decision to have the republic join the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS). Aliyev was the one on whom the Azeris pinned their hopes for progress in the settlement of the AAC. He first recognized Nagorno-Karabakh as an independent side in the conflict. There were contacts held in Moscow. Preparations were being made in the autumn to station international observers in the republic. The growing influence of the "Russian factor" was received differently by the southern neighbours of the countries participating in the AAC. Although Azeri-Turkish relations became somewhat cooler, reproaches were voiced in Yerevan that the "Azeri-Turkish military-political tandem" remained. According to a high placed Armenian official, this tandem tried to exert pressure on Moscow to make the Kremlin abandon the idea of playing the leading role in pacifying the region.¹⁸ Turkey indeed expressed its intention of sending to the region its peace-making forces along with Russians, which was met with disapproval in Yerevan. With the coming

to power of Aliyev and Azerbaijan joining the CIS, Moscow now has even more reason for believing that it is its responsibility to be the main support of the peace-making efforts in the region.

It is still unclear when the Armenian-Azerbaijan conflict will end. Both sides must show a desire for peace and to start resolving the conflict.

TAJIKISTAN AND THE CAUCASUS: A REVENGE SPREE

Apart from Nagorno-Karabakh, other high-intensity interethnic conflicts, with the use of mass violence, have occurred within the territory of the former USSR: Tajikistan, Moldova (the Transnistria area), Georgia (in Southern Ossetia and Abkhazia), and the Northern Caucasus (Northern Ossetia and Ingushetia). Considering the geographical boundaries chosen for research in this work, a detailed analysis will be made of some aspects of the Tajik conflict, and the Georgian and Northern Caucasian conflicts will be examined briefly.

The conflict in Tajikistan was quasi-ethnic; the confrontation between the regional elites was the decisive element, with the ethnic factor becoming more pronounced only by the end of 1992. The conflict, which until May 1992 represented a confrontation between the ex-communist Leninabad and Kulyab officialdom and the bloc of opposition forces (Rastokhez movement, the Democratic Party of Tajikistan, the Islamic Revival Party), was dealt with exclusively by the republic's administration itself. The ex-communist leaders, however, were not eager to negotiate with the opposition and to seek compromise solutions. A national reconciliation government was formed in May after a showdown between the demonstrators in the streets. The government included, along with members of the former officialdom, some representatives of the opposition forces. The struggle, however, continued, and not only for power in the central administrative bodies but also for control in the regions, for extending local influence. With the population accumulating arms and the Russian army playing an increasingly marginal role, an armed struggle flared up locally, with criminals beginning to play a growing role. Incidentally, the same was happening in other hot spots (in Georgia and Moldova, for example). Hardened criminals who had spent many years behind bars were appointed leaders of regional national armed units, subsequently joining the highest political elite (as Jaba Ioseliani in Georgia or Sangak Safarov in Tajikistan).

Next, attempts were made to extinguish the conflict by reaching agreement between the local militants in the Kulyab and Garm groups. The conciliatory commission was headed by Davlat Khudonazarov, the opposition's former presidential candidate, born in Gorno Badakhshan. With his active participation, an agreement was reached between the contending blocs in late July, and signed in the town of Khorog. However, the sides failed to comply with its provisions; the hostilities became even fiercer after the

signing of the agreement. Khudonazarov could not create for himself the image of a peacemaker. The Kulyab camp did not regard him as an unbiased mediator, and the Islamists reproached him for being too tractable. On the whole, Khudonazarov's popularity declined.

More bitter fighting resulted in further polarization of the opposing forces, which split into two camps. Their consolidation also became more pronounced, a tendency manifest in many other zones of conflict. The Rastokhez movement, the Democratic Party, the Islamic Revival Party, and the highest Muslim religious officials headed by Turadshon-zoda actually formed a united front despite their differences.

Each of the camps tried to win over the Russian army division or to neutralize it, exerting heavy pressure on it. A considerable number of its servicemen, including its commander, General Ashurov, were from Tajikistan. Quite a few officers sympathized with the Leninabad-Kulyab group, but the division also had in its midst supporters of the Islamic national-democratic bloc. According to representatives of Kulyab and the Islamist armed units, both sides were able to obtain weapons from the division's combat elements—stealing weapons and ammunition in some cases and in others buying them. Servicemen siding with either of the blocs supplied it with arms. Sometimes they or their relatives were blackmailed into giving up their weapons. Firearms were also delivered from Uzbekistan and smuggled in from Afghanistan.

Although the Russian army remained essentially neutral, the leaders of the opposed groups reproached it for interfering in the conflict. The leader of the Islamic-democratic bloc reported a massacre allegedly perpetrated by the military at one of the populated localities on the day of the signing of the Khorog agreement.

Fighting broke out between Islamic militants and the Kulyab volunteer corps in Kurgan-Tyube. Both sides committed appalling atrocities, taking hostages, massacring people, and subjecting them to torture. They victimized neutral people merely because they either resided in some specific town or village or were born in it. At that time, initial attempts at mediating began to be made by outside forces, mostly from Russia and Kyrgyzstan, but they were unable to influence the situation, which was increasingly controlled by field commanders. The Russian army was ordered to remain neutral, but some servicemen joining the armed units stole arms. Arms continued to be smuggled from Afghanistan, where members of the Islamist units arrived by illegally crossing the border, which the scanty Russian frontier troops could not properly guard.

Spokesmen for the Islamic—national democratic bloc insisted on a dual subordination of the Russian frontier troops to both Moscow and Dushanbe and on the frontier posts being headed by Tajik officers to “avoid conflicts between the Russian officers and the local trespassers.”

Because this issue remained undecided, the Tajik side delayed signing a

bilateral treaty with Moscow. At the same time, Moscow was extremely worried about the Tajik-Afghan border's not being guarded adequately and about the prospect of Tajik arms being spread from Tajikistan throughout Russia. By President Yeltsin's decree, Russian frontier troops in Tajikistan were placed under the jurisdiction of the Russian Federation. Russia and the Central Asian republics started holding permanent talks on the situation in Tajikistan.

According to reports from Islamic militants, they received arms in Afghanistan, mostly from Hekmatyar's units; a considerable part of them, however, was being swapped for valuables and goods smuggled out of Tajikistan.

Davlat Khudonazarov, one of the Tajik democratic movement's leaders, believed that Hekmatyar might be deliberately provoking the conflict in Tajikistan in an effort to set the Central Asian Tajiks and Uzbeks at loggerheads. Afghanistan's president, Burhanuddin Rabbani, visited Tashkent in mid-October 1992. His visit showed that neither the Uzbek president, Islam Karimov, nor official Kabul were interested in escalating the Tajik conflict. They may have counted on the advent of various Tajik forces to power, though.

The opposition's units forced Tajikistan's president, Rahmon Nabyiev, to resign early in September. This move failed to stabilize the situation, adding fuel to the fire instead. The conflicting sides, now virtually incapable of dialogue, launched an all-out extermination drive. It was becoming increasingly obvious that Tajikistan's south and north regions might split apart. There was also the threat of the republic's disintegrating into several smaller states. A massive Russian exodus got underway. The Uzbek leadership was becoming ever more concerned over the prospect of an Islamic state emerging in Tajikistan, staking on the past regime's return to power.

The presidents of Russia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, and Uzbekistan issued a joint statement on Tajikistan at a time when the local bloody conflict became aggravated still further. They demanded an end to the war and the restoration of legitimate government. It was decided to reinforce Russian border patrols stationed along the Tajik-Afghan border with servicemen from Central Asia.

Contrary to expectations, Turkmenia's president, Saparmurad Niyazov, declined to sign the statement on Tajikistan, explaining a reluctance to denounce the home policies of a sovereign nation. Niyazov also refused to take part in the quadripartite conference on Tajikistan that was held in Alma-Ata some time later and to send a Turkmen contingent to Tajikistan as part and parcel of a CIS peacekeeping force. "When we are talking about participation in joint CIS actions, we imply the possibility of an external threat. Conflicts inside the CIS are an internal affair of its states. The authorities of any specific state shouldn't ask their neighbours to restore order if they are unable to ensure peace and stability all on their own."¹⁹ Central

Asian states regarded this as a pretext for branding Niyazov's policies as isolationist.

The Kirgiz leadership launched a particularly active mediatory effort in October 1992, with Vice President Felix Kulov visiting Tajikistan several times in his capacity as representative of Central Asian states and Russia. Russian Foreign Minister Andrei Kozyrev also came on a peacekeeping mission, visiting Kurgan-Tyube and Kulyab and talking with field commanders. As compared to the Armenian-Azerbaijan conflict, the West played a minimal part in mediatory activities. However, Western nations, including the United States, furnished humanitarian relief aid to Tajikistan.

The Russian leadership, which was outwardly acting as a neutral peacemaker, had managed to solve the following dilemma for itself. Moscow had two options: to support Tajik democracy or side with ex-Communist and conservative forces. The former was fraught with a number of dangers:

- possible destabilization of the republican situation;
- a possible threat to Russian security and that of the Russian minority in Tajikistan;
- it was also highly possible that an Islamic regime might well emerge there.

For its part, the latter, which advocated an alliance with Russia and the CIS, did not share the political convictions of Russian authorities. At that time Moscow still hoped that the belligerents would compromise and that a coalition government would be created. Such a government could have relied on firm support of the neighbors of Tajikistan. At the same time, the Uzbek leadership obviously preferred that Islamic and nationalist forces be removed from power.

On October 23–24 the former speaker of the Tajik parliament, Safarali Kenjaev, who had resigned earlier at the insistence of the opposition, organized an abortive coup in Dushanbe. Kenjaev relied on the units of the Rigar and Gissar militia (West Tajikistan), using them as his shock battalions. The militia of these two regions, which has close ties with Uzbekistan, includes ethnic Uzbeks. At that time, the 201st Russian division blocked the southern approaches to Dushanbe, virtually helping the government thwart the putsch with the help of Islamic militia. (President Nabiev had been forced to resign by that time, a fact that was used by Safarali Kenjaev as a formal justification for his actions.)

The army maintained law and order in Dushanbe, protecting a number of facilities. The locals failed to involve the army in the feud. Meanwhile, the supporters of both the former regime and the Islamic faction, who were also afraid that the fight would escalate into a destructive civil war, kept saying that the Russian army should remain in the republic.

In the meantime, the army's actions betrayed a dual approach of Russian authorities who were faced with a dilemma. At that time Russia constituted a force that could influence local developments through its army (and did

so). However, Moscow preferred to coordinate its actions with Uzbekistan and other Central Asian states. It decided to support the holding of a Tajik parliamentary session together with political leaders (who would have solved all the issues concerning the situation inside the republic and the government) and to give priority to supporting the legitimate government.

The November 1992 conference in Alma-Ata involving Central Asian and Russian heads of state resolved to send a peacekeeping force into Tajikistan. Russia was represented by Kozyrev in Alma-Ata. This decision was never implemented, though; nobody seemed in a hurry to fulfill it, with the exception of Kyrgyz leaders, who submitted this issue to the republican parliament for consideration.

The MPs decided not to send Kyrgyz troops into Tajikistan, thereby declining to support President Askar Akayev, who did not insist on such a move, anyway.

Russia and the Central Asian republics were exerting great diplomatic efforts to convene the Tajik parliament's session. Prior to that, it was virtually impossible to gather the MPs because of a split and lack of safe working conditions. Diplomatic missions of the intermediary states were working in the republic. (Western embassies were evacuated from Dushanbe late in October.)

The Tajik parliamentary session opened on November 16; the leaders of all political groups and field commanders were invited to attend as well. The majority of the MPs elected a leadership, which chose to restore the former nomenklatura to power and to isolate the leaders of the Islamic-nationalist bloc (with Uzbek support). This resulted in the persecution of all persons who had taken part in the activities of the opposition, including the Muslim clergy.

The anti-Islamic campaign was used by Uzbek President Karimov to lash out against fundamentalists and the democrats—the Birlik movement primarily. Tashkent started playing an increasingly greater role in Tajikistan's internal affairs.

The role of the Central Asian factor was clearly manifested in the creation of a community of Central Asian states. The region's leaders met on January 4, 1993, in Tashkent. The summit's results evoked a mixed response inside the CIS and elsewhere. On the one hand, any moves to achieve regional integration conformed to the interests of Russia and those republics, which strove to strengthen the CIS. On the other hand, some people voiced apprehension that a predominantly Turkic alliance might entail their isolation from the Slav republics, a prospect fraught with negative consequences.

Tajik intellectuals, including those who were the staunchest opponents of the conservative regime, and their nationalist counterparts began to fear that such an alliance might be used for "flooding" the Tajik (Iranian) element by a "Turkic ocean." Such apprehensions were partially justified by Uzbekistan's extremely active role in normalizing life in the republic after the

election of a new parliamentary leadership and the inauguration of the new government.

Some Russian political forces linked the possible alienation of Central Asia with Turkey's ambitions. Quite a few Russian MPs (mostly conservatives) worried about the growing importance of the "Turkish factor," explaining their concern by the following reasons:

- they are afraid that the "Turkish factor" might serve to increase separatist sentiments inside Russia, facilitating the consolidation of its Turkic autonomies;
- they tend to distrust Western intentions in general, as the West is supporting Turkey's predominant role;
- they also strive to preserve a good relationship with Russia's traditional partners, which can be regarded as its brethren-in-faith and which have a similar historical heritage. This striving was also manifested in the Russian parliament's position with regard to the Yugoslav crisis when the MPs criticized the government for assuming an overly anti-Serbian stand.

Chairman of the Committee for International and Foreign Economic Affairs of the Supreme Soviet of the Russian Federation Yevgeny Ambartsumov wrote: "During the recent visit by the Russian parliamentary delegation to Greece and Cyprus, our partners there were surprised why Russia was not concerned about the growing activities of the pan-Turkic forces. 'Don't you realise the possibility of a historical revenge on Russia?' they asked."²⁰

However, not all critics of the "too pro-Western" position of the Russian government shared this point of view, though some supporters of "a strong power" did. Many of them advocate the idea of the Euro-Asian nature of Russia and a close Slavonic-Turkic union that underlies the unity of a strong state to which Turkic solidarity, if it does not undermine this unity, was not an obstacle. The representatives of both sides, however, admitted the need to intensify the role of Russia in settling conflicts. The attempts of some Western politicians to deny Russia the right to fulfill this function were given a hostile reception. To quote Yevgeny Ambartsumov again: "Addressing the conference of Russian and American politologists in Moscow, Dr. Kissinger gave it to understand that if Russia interferes in conflicts outside its borders but in the territory of the former Soviet Union, this would be rejected by the world community (that is, the USA). But if the matter concerns the protection of human rights and the rights of ethnic minorities?"²¹

In this situation, Russia has taken a more active position with regard to Tajikistan. This manifested itself, in particular, during the preparations for the CIS summit in Minsk on January 22, 1993.

At the press conference given by the Tajik leadership in Moscow on January 21, Tajik Prime Minister Abdumalik Abdullojonov said that the Tajik people hoped for large-scale aid from the CIS countries, including

defending the border with Afghanistan. According to his data, strong forces were concentrated on the other side of the border, ten camps were organized to train Tajik Islamists, and there was a danger of breaking through the border. The chairman of the Tajik National Security Committee said that Hekmatyar was helping the Islamists. Asked about the role of Sangak Safarov and whether he is controlled by the government, the prime minister said: "It would be no exaggeration to say that the whole world knows Sangak Safarov. Our government has come to power thanks to the Popular Front. We continue to closely cooperate with it. The new government has issued a special decree to form the republic's own armed forces on the basis of the Popular Front of Tajikistan."

The Tajik leaders were obviously exaggerating the "Afghan threat" with the aim of ensuring reliable defense of the border. (They accused Hekmatyar, just as D. Khudonazarov had earlier; however, according to experts, there were not so many training camps in Afghanistan.) The glorification of Sangak Safarov was explained by the fact that it was the Kulyab home guards who had to do "dirty work," that is, to conduct purges among the active supporters of the opposition. Criminal proceedings were instituted against the leaders (excluding Kazikolon Turadzhon-zoda), and searches were carried out. Representatives of the old Leninabad nomenklatura chose to be more cautious. Chairman of the Tajik Supreme Soviet Emomali Rakhmonov talked with Boris Yeltsin for three hours. The Minsk summit decided that the CIS countries, which agreed to a joint defense of the borders, would send five battalions in addition to the Russian border guards.

At the end of January, Moscow granted the republic, on the verge of hunger, a multibillion credit to buy grain. The leaders and activists of national-democratic parties have found refuge in Moscow, and some of the armed Islamists have crossed the border and gone to Afghanistan; at least 10,000 have entrenched themselves in Gorno Badakhshan.

At this writing, Tajikistan is far from stable, yet, the Islamic movement has been hurled back all over Central Asia. The Tajik experience has been used by Central Asian leaders as an argument in favor of strengthening authoritarian tendencies and limiting political freedom. In Kyrgyzstan, the former nomenklatura has increased its pressure on President Akayev.

Djumgalbek Amanbayev, a member of parliament (former first secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Kyrgyzstan), who is considered to be the head of the opposition to the leadership of the republic, stated that the unification of the political forces in Issyk-Kul and Naryn regions, on the one hand, and in Chui and Talass, on the other, could lead to clashes similar to those in Tajikistan.²² In such an event, the Issyk-Kul (the birthplace of Amanbayev) and Naryn forces will apparently take the side of the opposition, with the Chui and Talass forces supporting President Askar Akayev.

The structure of power in Kyrgyzstan is in some ways similar to that in

Russia. Democratically oriented President Akayev is opposed by the conservative majority in the Supreme Soviet, that is, the former party nomenklatura, which is afraid of strong executive power. It is for this reason that in the autumn of 1992, the parliament supported the draft constitutions designed to subordinate the government to the parliament. According to Askar Akayev, the conservative wing of the Supreme Soviet is backed by "clans, capitals and contacts. They constitute a real force. The influence of national democratic forces is less felt. They have a weak social base."²³

Despite the attempts made by the republic's new authorities to stabilize the situation in Tajikistan, 1993 has not eased the tensions. In the summer, vigorous actions were started by the armed gangs that had found refuge in Afghanistan, which was actually a step towards the internationalization of the conflict. The Russian frontier guards guarding the border which, as defined by the Russian president was simultaneously the Russian border as well, found themselves under double fire—from Afghanistan and from the Islamic volunteers in the territory of Tajikistan. In July 1993, the *mujahedeens* killed 24 Russian frontier guards, which impelled Russia and its Collective Security Treaty partners to take measures to fortify the border. The August 7 conference of the heads of state of Russia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan, and Tajikistan in Moscow adopted a programme of action to settle the situation in Tajikistan. It was recommended that the Tajik administration enter into negotiations with the opposition, who, however, inspired no steps in this direction and, until at least November 1993, it demonstrated its utter unwillingness to have any contact with the opposition. Disagreements started among the winners themselves, and their growth was furthered by the assassination of Sangak Safarov, the leader of the Popular Front. With the persecution of the unorthodox in Tajikistan and arrests and murders of the opposition members, this resort to force can hardly ensure stabilization of the situation in this country.

The Georgian-Abkhazian conflict which started in 1992, was the second one between the center and the Transcaucasian republic after the Georgian-South Ossetian conflict. The South Ossetian conflict was quelled as a result of the diplomatic efforts of Georgia, Russia, North and South Ossetia, and the peacekeeping forces of Russia, North Ossetia, and Georgia in that autonomous republic. This role has been positively regarded by the CSCE. When at the beginning of 1993, at the time of the worsening of Russian-Georgian relations, rumors were spread about the possible withdrawal of the Russian peacekeeping forces, the CSCE representative who visited the region said that the action was premature.²⁴ The role of Russia was important also for another reason: the conflict had a "Russian dimension": the Supreme Soviet of South Ossetia appealed to Russia to admit the republic to the Russian Federation and unite it with North Ossetia, and Russia's support for the territorial integrity of Georgia became a decisive factor.

In the Abkhazian case, the situation was somewhat different, though the

Russian dimension was not smaller. The Supreme Soviet of Abkhazia also appealed to Russia to admit the republic to the Russian Federation; ethnic groups related to Abkhazians live in Russia and in Northern Caucasus. One of the aggravating factors was that most people in Northern Caucasus sympathized with the Abkhazians, and the Confederation of the Mountain Peoples of the Caucasus (an independent public-political organization in opposition to the local authorities) sent volunteer detachments to Abkhazia where they played a role in military operations at the front. The second complicating factor was differences between the Russian political forces and the institutions of power with regard to the position on the conflict, and the third factor was the presence of Russian troops in the conflict zone. The Russian government wanted to remain neutral on the basis of respect for the territorial integrity of Georgia and tried to prevent the North Caucasian volunteers from participating in battle, and possibly to play the role of a mediator in settling the conflict. The Russian parliament, on the other hand, occupied a different position. Not supporting Abkhazian separatism in principle, it condemned Georgia's use of arms against the Abkhazians in its statement of September 25. The Supreme Soviet of the Russian Federation criticized both the West and the Russian government for their pro-Georgian position and spoke of "justice and compassion for the people subjected to military attacks."²⁵

At the first stage, Russia played an important mediatory role in attempts to settle the conflict. On September 3, Boris Yeltsin, Eduard Shevardnadze, and Vladislav Ardzinba came to an agreement to cease fire, take other measures to lessen tension, and start a dialogue. This agreement was positively assessed by the international community, which (at the level of governments and international organizations) called upon the sides to abide by this agreement. However, the agreement was not fulfilled.

As in other conflicts, both sides accused Russia of supplying arms to the enemy. At the press conference on October 6, after the successful offensive by Abkhazian and North Caucasian units, Shevardnadze said that the Georgian side had been three times stronger than the enemy but that the Abkhazian side had strengthened its positions with the help of Russia.²⁶ The Georgian leader said that Georgia had appealed to the United Nations and NATO, which supported it politically.

For the first time Georgia showed a mistrust of Russia, though Russia always regarded Georgia as its strategic ally in Transcaucasia. Yet Moscow continued its mediation activities in an attempt to convince the sides to observe the reached agreement. As in the case of the Azerbaijan-Armenian conflict (AAC), the sides did not want to agree to a compromise. Each hoped to reach a military advantage or to prevent the other side from doing this and thus force it to accept its terms. As in the AAC, there were two levels of problems to be settled. One consisted of problems without the solution

of which the sides did not want to start a dialogue. Georgia's demand was to withdraw the North Caucasian units; Abkhazia insisted on withdrawing Georgian troops. The second was the problems underlying the conflict—the status of Abkhazia in the first place. As to the Azerbaijan-Armenian conflict, there is also the third, procedural, level: representation at the talks.

At the meeting with the UN mission, headed by UN Assistant Secretary-General Antoine Blanco, that visited Georgia and Abkhazia in mid-October, Chairman of the Abkhazian Supreme Soviet Vladislav Ardzinba said: "It was not the United Nations but the Confederation of the Mountain Peoples of the Caucasians that defended us."²⁷ He also expressed his displeasure with the mission: the message from the Abkhazian leadership to Boutros Ghali had been disregarded, while immediate reaction followed the message from Eduard Shevardnadze. Abkhazia continued to insist that the withdrawal of Georgian troops from Abkhazia was the main condition for settling the armed conflict and starting a political dialogue.

Returning to the role of Russia-as-mediator in settling the Georgian-Abkhazian conflict (GAC), it is necessary to point out that this example gives a good opportunity to consider one of the variants of a third party's position: a kind of pluralistic approach (which was mentioned at the beginning of this chapter) to be explained by a different attitude to the conflicting sides by different political forces and institutions of power. This can be seen, in particular, from the different positions and political behaviour of the Russian government and the Supreme Soviet. Does this situation exacerbate the conflict or help to pacify the sides? How does it influence the ability of a third party to be a mediator in the conflict? It would be logical to answer that this situation does not help settle the conflict and does not raise the potential of a third party as a mediator; however, in reality, there is no single answer to these questions. At any rate, the sides are often trying to capitalize on the existing differences with the aim of winning support.

The military coup against the dictatorship of former dissident Gamsakhurdia in Georgia in January 1992 gave the Georgian regime the color which did not disappear after Shevardnadze's return to the republic, even after his victory at the elections of the chairman of the parliament on October 11. The formation of such a supra-parliamentary body as the State Defence Council, called upon to "coordinate the activities of executive and legislative power," was one of the manifestations of the specific features of this system of power under which military leaders preserve tremendous influence and, possibly, are interested in preserving constant conflicts and threats to prevent the transition of the key role in the structures of power to parliament.

As a result of the deterioration of Georgia's relations with Russia, Tbilisi's strong reaction to the Russian parliament's statement of September 25, and the participation of Russia's citizens in the military operations on the side

of Abkhazia, many Georgian leaders stated at the time that Russia could not be a mediator in the conflict. This put Shevardnadze, who stood for preserving traditionally close relations with Russia, in a difficult position.

The address of the Russian government of October 12 concerning the conflict in Abkhazia showed the aspiration of its authors to blame both sides for frustrating the accords reached on September 3: "The process of disbanding, disarming and withdrawing voluntary troops from Abkhazia, which illegally penetrated it, has been disrupted. The Georgian side has not redeployed and reduced its troops in the conflict zone as was agreed upon."²⁸ The parties to the conflict, as the address said, "have not displayed political will for settlement." The Russian government waved away all accusations of being partial to one side or the other. Its call "to create all conditions in the near future for resuming legitimate power in Abkhazia" was in obvious contraction with the line taken at the time by the State Council of Georgia towards actual removing V. Ardzinba and his associates from power.

The Georgian-Abkhazian conflict has vividly shown that the strength of separatism (if we disengage ourselves from the question: was there an objective cause—infringement of the rights of the Abkhazian population by Georgia?) is based not so much on the national egoism of the eponymous nation (the Abkhazians in the republic account for only 17 percent of the population), as on the economic interests underlying the attractiveness of independent existence.

After further exacerbation of the situation in Abkhazia at the beginning of January 1993, Eduard Shevardnadze appealed to the United Nations to send peace-keeping forces to Abkhazia and to call upon Georgia's neighbouring countries not to interfere in that conflict. There can be no doubt that he primarily meant Russia. At the same time, however, he agreed to hold talks in Moscow to discuss Georgian-Russian economic cooperation.

The appeal to the United Nations was a new confirmation of the fact that the Georgian president started to wish for international organisations and the West to settle the conflict in Abkhazia, hoping for the pro-Georgian position of the leading Western powers.

On January 5, Georgian Prime Minister Sigua stated again that his country "will not give an inch of its land," though not a single mediator in the conflict advanced such demands.

During a conversation with U.S. Assistant State Secretary R. Armitage in early January 1993, Shevardnadze said that Georgia would continue to render assistance to neighbor countries (having in mind Armenia) and would not change its course toward democracy. As he put it, the West must play a stabilizing role in the life of Georgia.²⁹

Russia seems to have been able, however, to achieve a change for the better in the Georgian-Abkhazian conflict. Its mediation helped the conclusion of the Sochi agreements, establishing a cease-fire and starting the withdrawal of troops. The way to negotiations seemed to be open and the phase

of military confrontation completed. However, in the autumn of 1993, under the pretext that the Georgian side had failed to fulfil the terms of withdrawal of the troops, the Abkhazians suddenly launched active combat operations, the result of which was fierce bombings of Sukhumi, the capital of Abkhazia. On September 27, the Abkhazian units fully captured the city, which meant their military victory. One of the worst consequences of the armed solution of this conflict was the ethnic purges that left almost no Georgian population in Abkhazia. The secret support of Abkhazia by the leading officials of the Supreme Soviet and by the conservative wing of the Russian military establishment has to no small degree helped the Abkhazians' military victory. Shevardnadze declared that Georgia fell victim to a large and strong state of war with which it could never win. In his interview to the Georgian TV center, on the eve of the October events in Moscow, the Georgian leader stressed that "Georgia's defeat is the first victory of the reactionary forces of Russia and the beginning of imperial revanche on the entire territory of the former USSR."³⁰

The defeat of the planners of the revolt made Russian mediation more acceptable to the Georgian leaders. Shevardnadze, having collected the signatures of the temporarily unfunctioning Georgian parliament, on October 22 signed the decree on Georgia's joining the CIS. It can be asserted that while Karabakh contributed to Azerbaijan's joining the CIS, Abkhazia helped to no small degree the adoption of a similar decision by Georgia. That allowed some of the analysts to allege that Russia was deliberately fanning the fires of conflict to achieve such a result. Attacked by the troops of ex-President Gamsakhurdia, who had launched an offensive, the Georgian leader even turned to Russia for military aid. Moscow preferred, as in the Central Asian version, acting collectively—together with the states of the Transcaucasian region. It was decided at a conference in Moscow that military contingents from Russia and these republics should take part in the guarding of the railway line that was vitally important not only to Georgia but also to the neighbouring Armenia. At the same time, Moscow fully excluded any military participation on its part in the inner Georgian conflict, despite the official request of the leader whose legitimate rule it recognized. Thus, by the end of 1993 the situation of this conflict also changed in favor of a more active participation of Russia, which, however, did not exclude the international community taking part in the peace-making efforts.

Addressing the UN General Assembly session on September 27, 1993, Andrei Kozyrev mentioned the financial problems confronting Russia in connection with the burden of its participation in peace-making actions throughout the territory of the former USSR, and proposed creating a voluntary fund to lighten this burden. He proposed considering a general modern strategy of peace-making, defining the conception of political leadership on the part of the UNO, and creating an effective military command under

the General Secretary's control, a Security Council special committee to improve peace-making operations, and a UN "reserve force."

Subsequent developments have shown that the choice of this or that mediator may be used as a political weapon within the Georgian government itself. In early February 1993 the Georgian defense minister, T. Kitovani, who is in conflict with Shevardnadze, declared that Russia's participation in the process of political settlement was essential. He said he did not believe it was necessary for Georgia to seek UN assistance at this stage. "Besides, the UN is unable to make a decision to send military police to Abkhazia without Russia's approval." The statement was clearly aimed at challenging Shevardnadze and partly at warding off accusations of pursuing an anti-Russian policy.

The bloody Ossetian-Ingush conflict was yet another one to have broken out in the recent period. It has been the first and so far the only armed conflict on the territory of the Russian Federation. As distinct from the Georgian-Abkhazian conflict, it was unconnected with the struggle of the political elite for independent development but centered on a territorial dispute between the two autonomous republics. Attempts at settling the conflict have been made solely by the Russian center. Troops were dispatched to the zone of the conflict, a state of emergency was introduced, and the provisional administration led by a deputy premier of the Russian Federation established.

The actions taken by Russian authorities to deal with the conflict highlighted the significance of such a factor as the role of departments and even persons. For instance, Deputy Premier Georgy Khizha, who was initially charged with supervising the actions in the zone of the Ossetian-Ingush conflict, was accused (not without grounds) of having taken a too pro-Ossetian position, and only his replacement by another deputy premier, Sergei Shakhrai, amended the situation. Some observers also pointed out that in late November, the command of the Russian units in the zone of the conflict escaped to some extent the control of civilian authorities, evidenced by the fact of a failure to observe the initial Gaidar-approved agreement on the withdrawal of troops.

Nor was there a consensus in Russia's structures of power on the basic issue of the Ossetian-Ingush conflict: the disputed territory. Some Russian MPs who had visited the zone of the conflict expressed themselves in favor of Russia's direct jurisdiction over the disputed Prigorodny District, the withdrawal of all armed groups, and the bringing in of Interior Ministry forces. Deputy Viktor Yugin spoke of the need to let refugees return home (though the Ossetian authorities did not allow the Ingush at that time to return to the Prigorodny District, and about 40,000 of them remained in Ingushetia), to make an inquiry into the activities of the leaders of the former provisional administration of the emergency zone, which had arbitrarily

upset the scheme of imposing a state of emergency and "stained the Russian soldier's honour."³¹

In January 1993, at the joint initiative of the Russian government and parliament (S. Shakhrai and R. Abdulatipov), a coordinating council was formed of the leaders of North Caucasian republics and regions, including the conflicting parties, as well as the leaders of political parties and movements. That body succeeded in initiating a negotiation process between the Ossetian and Ingush sides, with the Stavropol Territory and Dagestan as mediators.

Like other ethnic conflicts in the post-Soviet zone, the Ossetian-Ingush conflict was marked by the exceptional bitterness of the opposing sides (especially well-pronounced on the part of marginal groups, home guards from South Ossetia, for example), the seizure of hostages, the desire to solve all problems solely by violence.

All of the conflicts examined in this book have caused waves of migration, and this bred new conflicts at places of migrants' resettlement. Fleeing from a conflict area is one kind of migration, and this has acquired a mass character in the former USSR. Among other kinds of migration are a return (or attempts to return) by deported peoples to their historical homeland, now long occupied by citizens belonging to other ethnic groups, or movement to places where they can find a better-paid job, get housing, and so on, that is, leaving economically unfavorable districts for more favorable ones. Each kind of migration has different outcomes. At first authorities did not pay much attention to this phenomenon; they failed to take active measures and to work out a policy on migration. Voluntary public organizations seized the initiative. Sometimes the conduct of resettlers provoked mass discontent and even acts of violence. In some regions, a stand taken on the issue of migration was used by a number of local movements for gaining stronger positions among the indigenous population, which they were out to "protect."

The Krasnodar Territory is an example. Despite the fact that this southern Russian territory is rather homogeneous—the proportion of Russians exceeds 86 percent (Ukrainians, 3.9 percent; Armenians, 3.7 percent; Adygheis, 0.5 percent)—most of the non-Slav population resides in small groups. Armenians live mainly on the Black Sea coast (they account for 18 percent of the population of Tuapse District) and near the city of Armavir; the Adygheis live in the republic of the same name; and the Shapsugs, a people related to them, who have demanded the establishment of their own national-territorial entity, reside on the coast.

Anti-Armenian sentiments are the strongest among a portion of the Slav population of the Krasnodar Territory. The Spitak earthquake and the Armenian-Azerbaijani conflict have led to a 2.5-fold increase in the Armenian population of the territory in the last four years, and, according to the data

of the Russian Supreme Soviet Commission, the proportion of Armenians in the production sphere, where earnings are not high, approximates 3–4 percent, whereas they account for 25 percent of employees in the nonproduction sphere. Citizens of Russia, however, dislike the rich, and therein lies one of the sources of interethnic tension. These imbalances in settlements, jobs, and income were among the direct causes of conflicts in every instance, although it is sometimes difficult to explain why the anger of a group of citizens was vented on a particular ethnic group rather than a different one.

A complicated situation has taken shape in other areas of Russia owing to the inflow of Armenian and then Abkhazian refugees, with Meskhetian Turks still staying there. The Russian federation has proved unable to accept even the massive stream of Russian citizens into the country from the various hot spots and the republics, where the rights of nonnative peoples were infringed upon. As a result of the Ossetian-Ingush conflict, early in 1993 more than 60,000 refugees from the disputed Prigorodny District of Vladikavkaz gathered in Ingushetia. Their return is one of the more complex problems of settling the conflict in view of the feelings of hatred and the desire to avenge themselves for the bloodshed, which divided the two peoples.

By the beginning of 1993, about half a million Azeri refugees from Armenia and Karabakh had gathered in Azerbaijan. Refugees are the most explosive material capable of aggravating crisis situations. Thus, the Azeri refugees who gathered on the border with Iran caused tension and gave rise to many speculations as to what Iran's intentions were.

The experience in settling ethnic conflicts shows that they are deeply rooted and closely connected to ethnic, religious, clan, and family values and aspirations. The problems themselves dividing the opposing sides (this is irrelevant to the domestic Tajik conflict) are complex and form strong obstacles to reconciliation. The mechanisms available for settlement have proved unable so far to shift the conflicts from the level of military confrontation to political dialogue.

RUSSIA'S SERVICEMEN IN THE ZONES OF CONFLICTS

Increased ethnic tension and the escalation of conflicts were observed on the territory of the USSR even before the disintegration of the single state, where the USSR armed forces still existed and somewhat restrained those processes, although the illegitimate use of the army planted a time bomb. The Soviet Union's disintegration touched off the process of final division of the armed forces, the transfer of army units under the jurisdiction of the new independent states (initially, they had come under Russia's jurisdiction), a process that still continues. Similarly, the destiny of Russian servicemen has not yet finally been decided. Only in a few cases—in Turkmenistan, for

example—has the status of units and formations of the Russian army been defined by bilateral agreement signed between Russia and that republic.

The question of military property had become a matter of discord long before the USSR's disintegration, when some republics, having proclaimed sovereignty, started claiming their jurisdiction of either some or all arms, equipment, and property belonging to units and formations of the armed forces of the USSR. In a number of instances, arguments about this provided grounds for a serious dispute, like the one between Russia and Ukraine over the Black Sea Fleet.

The presence of Russian army units in the zones of conflicts or in close proximity to them is a major factor, having a serious impact on their development. Each of the opposing sides seeks to use this factor in its own interests or to neutralize it, preventing it from being used by the other side.

Armenia is one of the states involved in the conflict that has settled the army issue with Russia. It signed a bilateral treaty with Russia and joined those member states of the commonwealth that concluded the collective security treaty. This treaty provided Armenia with guarantees of protection by those states in the event of encroachment upon its sovereignty. (The treaty was signed by six heads of the CIS member states at the Tashkent Summit on May 15, 1992: Armenia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Russia, Tajikistan, and Uzbekistan. It was expected that the armed forces of those states could be united. That did not come to pass. On the eve of the summit meeting, Kazakhstan announced the formation of its own armed forces, assuming jurisdiction over all the units, equipment, and property of the units of the joint commonwealth armed forces stationed on its territory.) At the earlier stages of the movement for independence, Armenia favored the withdrawal of all Russian troops, whereas the escalation of the Karabakh conflict caused it to modify its views. The understandings reached with Russia and other member states of the commonwealth and the arms and military equipment provided by them helped stabilize the military-political situation in the republic and facilitated its military successes in April–June 1992, particularly in the opening of the Lachin corridor, which linked it with Nagorno-Karabakh.

This led to strained relations between Russia and Azerbaijan, with the latter accusing Moscow of “aiding and abetting Armenia’s aggression.” As a result of talks, Russia agreed to transfer considerable quantities of arms and military equipment to the Azerbaijani army, which caused a painful reaction from the Armenian side, all the more so since this was followed by the intensification of military operations by Baku, with the use of air, missiles, and heavy artillery systems, which resulted in the seizure of a considerable part of the territory of Nagorno-Karabakh by the Azerbaijani army.

Analyzing the reasons for the setbacks of the Armenian forces in August 1992, R. Shugaryan, press secretary of the Armenian president, put them

down to the fact that the Russian army had transferred much larger quantities of arms to Azerbaijan than to Armenia. "This is explained by the diarchy in the Commonwealth armed forces, and also by the activities of certain quarters within the leadership of Russia interested as they are in weakening Armenia and, conversely, strengthening Azerbaijan," the press secretary said. "Incidentally, those same quarters are working against President Yeltsin."³²

The desire of this or that opposing side to find some ulterior political motives behind Russia's actions pursued the aim of inducing it to modify its position and to take a step in its favor. Such maneuvers employed by each of the opposing sides at times produced results, since Russia had, in effect, no clearly defined strategy on the matter and was often guided by temporary considerations in reactions to the development of the situation in the zone of the conflict.

The Russian leadership set itself the strategic task of ensuring its army's neutrality, to prevent it from getting involved in hostilities on the side of one of the opposing forces. In fact, however, all the forces in the conflict accused the Russian military of involvement in the hostilities on the enemy side. Such accusations were periodically leveled at Russia by Armenia, Azerbaijan, Moldova (while in conflict with Transnistria), Georgia, Abkhazia, and Tajikistan (during the conflict at home). As time passed, such accusations were dispelled in the main, but there remained charges of upsetting parity between the opposing sides through the transfer of military equipment.

Thus, in August 1992, the Armenian side laid the blame on Russia for helping to intensify the conflict. As V. Shirkhanyan, adviser to the president on defense matters, said, since both sides were being armed through Russia, Yerevan proposed a zero option: no arms to either side plus strict control of armaments. Russia, however, transferred large quantities of equipment to Azerbaijan, while the transfer of equipment to Armenia was being delayed. In the wake of this, the Armenian side started speaking of the need to observe parity. In August 1992, V. Shirkhanyan claimed that the Azeri side was far ahead in getting modern heavy weapons.

Nevertheless, arms were transferred to the Armenian side, too. The Armenian defense minister, Vazgen Sarkisyan, confirmed the fact of the proliferation of the Russian army's arms: "The local command cannot control this process: Russian troops did not know their status, what rights and duties they had. But what happens if an army officer is in charge of a depot, where thousands of weapons are stored?"³³

This means the unlawful transfer of arms and combat equipment. There were two ways of carrying this out: sales of arms and equipment by Russian servicemen and their seizure. Against the background of slackening discipline in units of the Russian army, the uncertainty of the destiny of servicemen, financial difficulties, close ties with local citizens, and often

dependence on them, army officers and men quite often could not resist the temptation of selling arms and equipment. Both leaders of the Kulyab armed formations (the Popular Front of Tajikistan and others) and their adversaries from the Popular Democratic army (a voluntary formation consisting of Islam supporters and democrats) claim that they have acquired weapons from Russian servicemen.

Errors in Russia's policy in the zone of the Armenian-Azerbaijani conflict consisted not so much in the fact that it disrupted parity in favor of Azerbaijan, as in the fact that in various regions of the former USSR, it transferred weapons to this or that side. Sometimes this process went on simultaneously, beyond the control of the central authorities.

In 1991 and 1992 the republics of the former USSR were forming their national armies, though in the first months of the CIS existence, the republics' leaders were not yet sure of the expedience of this step. This process was especially intensive in the republics at war. Azerbaijan was the first republic of the former USSR to free itself completely from the Soviet troops. The involvement of the Soviet units in the Baku events in January 1990, which acted on the orders of Defense Minister Yazov and KGB chief Kryuchkov, played no small role in the collapse of the 4th army. It had been disbanded by the autumn of 1992, and within two months almost 60,000 Russian servicemen were withdrawn from the territory of the republic. Under the protocol signed, the last Russian border guard will leave the republic by the end of 1993.

Representatives of Slavic peoples constitute 80 percent of the officers' corps in the former Soviet army. Consequently, the republics of the former USSR could not meet their requirements in qualified specialists, employing only ethnic officers. It needs time to train them. That is why Russia and Ukraine have witnessed an intensive process of recruiting graduates of military academies and staff officers.

A poll conducted by the Center of Military, Sociological, Psychological and Legal Studies in conjunction with the magazine *Army* revealed that the transfer of servicemen of the Russian army and the CIS united armed forces to armed formations of the warring republics on the territory of the former USSR is not typical: only 5 percent of the personnel have left. These are mostly representatives of indigenous population; 53 percent of them were driven by the desire to serve their people and society in the struggle against separatism, or for the "country's sovereignty." In the Transnistria area, such motives were the protection of the republic's interests and an unwillingness to live under the "Roman yoke." Forty-four percent of volunteers were guided by purely financial considerations. These are mostly Russians and Ukrainians fighting in the Armenian or Azerbaijani armies (their pay there is one and a half to two times as high as in the Russian army, apart from considerable compensation for "specific service conditions"). Russian experts believe that a new wave of mercenaries may appear.

Even the most peaceful member states of the CIS have national armies. For example, Turkmenistan has declared that no serviceman from other republics will remain on its territory by the year 2000.

At the initial stage of the troop withdrawal from Afghanistan, an "Afghan syndrome" prevailing in Russia made the public reject any participation of Russian servicemen in conflicts beyond its territory. The Russian people spoke for reducing the country's military activities abroad in general. The use of the Soviet army against radically minded nationalists in Vilnius, Baku, and Tbilisi in the Gorbachev epoch also contributed to such sentiments. However, after the disintegration of the Soviet Union, some changes occurred in public opinion. The majority of the members of the Russian Parliament committee on international and foreign economic relations held that Russia should protect its borders more vigorously and, if necessary, interfere in the settlement of conflicts on the territory of the former USSR. "One can surely understand the feelings of the Russian people and the army towards interference in conflicts outside Russia as too many Russian young people were killed and there were a lot of undeserved humiliations," wrote Yevgeny Ambartsumov, chairman of the committee. "However, speaking about Russia's future, is it admissible to ignore the emergence of hostile or disintegrating forces at its borders?"³⁴

By this time Russia had already had some experience of involvement in ethnic and quasi-ethnic conflicts in the former Soviet republics. The following types of involvement can be singled out:

1. Sporadic military actions with the use of only firearms to thwart the attacks on the positions of the Russian troops. Such instances, for example, took place in Abkhazia, when Russian soldiers had to return fire.
2. The advancement of units to the positions designated for maintaining law and order without the use of force. As a rule, this takes place when an action organized by an opposition ethnic or political movement presents a threat to the legitimate government. For example, in May 1992, Russian tanks entered Dushanbe in order to block the supporters of the Islamic-Democratic Alliance who gathered in Shokhidon Square. This action helped maintain law and order for some time but intensified confrontation in the republic.
3. Active but limited military operations with a peacekeeping mission. These operations aim at preventing the defeat of the force, for the preservation of which stands the Russian leadership or the army itself. At the same time they aim to protect the local population or ethnic Russians in the conflict zone. To these operations may be referred the operations of the 14th Russian army in Transdnistria region. At the initial stage of the conflict, the army's command, which was mostly composed of the local officers, had freedom of maneuver, and not all of its operations were sanctioned by the political leadership.
4. Peacekeeping operations carried out exclusively within the framework of the tasks set by the political leadership and probably legitimized by bilateral or multilateral intergovernment agreements. Such operations were carried out in

Tajikistan in late 1992 when the 201st Russian Division had a decisive effect on the development of the situation in the republic, and in South Ossetia, where a corresponding agreement was reached with Georgia. The use of the Russian army in the zone of ethnic unrest on Russia's territory is a completely specific case.

On a number of occasions Russian servicemen formed part of peacekeeping forces in conjunction with representatives of other former Soviet republics. For example, the decision to form the CIS peacekeeping force to be dispatched to Tajikistan was adopted in autumn 1992 at the meeting of the heads of Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, Kyrgyzstan, and Russia held in Alma-Ata.

5. Participation of Russian servicemen as military observers with peacekeeping tasks for gathering information on the observance of agreements (on truce, cease-fire, etc.). This took place in the zone of the Armenian-Azerbaijani conflict.

According to the Russian Defense Ministry, 13,224 Russian servicemen were among the peace-keeping force in conflict zones as of early 1993. A considerable part of this contingent—5,500 people—were part of the peace-keeping forces operating on Russian territory, in the zone of the Ossetian-Ingush conflict. Their tasks were defined as follows:

- disengagement of the conflicting sides and their withdrawal to areas determined by supervisory commissions;
- patrolling in the zones of disengagement and supervision of cease-fire conditions;
- being on duty at checkpoints and basic highways;
- rendering assistance to and protection of refugees and the local population.

A 900-strong infantry battalion formed on the basis of an airborne division (on a contractual basis) was operating in Yugoslavia by the beginning of 1993 as part of the UN peacekeeping force. Over 600 people from the 27th Motorized Rifle Division were sent to South Ossetia. About 1,500 volunteers were sent to Transnistria area as part of the peace-keeping force.³⁵

Some sharp criticism was voiced in Russia concerning the participation of the Russian army in conflicts, even those with a peace-keeping mission. According to Major-General Vladimir Dudnik, "heavy losses sustained in the first hours of the war in North Ossetia confirmed the fact that the Russian army was not ready for carrying out local military operations."³⁶ Normally, army units are manned (according to the law on compulsory military service) with inexperienced recruits, unprepared to conduct operations in such conditions. The current participation of the army in the Caucasian campaign may lead to the emergence of a "Caucasian syndrome" as well.

The issue of how to divide military hardware, arms, and assets of the Russian army (to be more exact, the "Soviet army" transferred to the jurisdiction of Russia) continues to engender problems in the conflict areas.

Attacks on Russian units stationed in conflict zones with the aim of seizing weapons and military hardware became widespread at the initial stage of the conflict in Armenia and Azerbaijan and later in Georgia and during the South Ossetian and then Abkhaz conflicts.

On October 3, 1992, the State Council of Georgia entrusted the Military Collegium and the government of the republic with the task of transferring into its possession all military hardware, arms, and equipment of the Russian units located on its territory. This decision was taken after a series of accusations against Russian servicemen voiced by the Abkhaz and Georgian sides that the Russian army was transferring its military equipment to the opposing side. Russian Minister of Defense Pavel Grachev declared after this that the decision of the Georgian leaders "led to gross violation of the previously reached agreements on quotas set for Georgia in transferring to it part of the military hardware, arms and equipment of the former Soviet Army, and might provoke a sharp deterioration of the situation and armed clashes with the Russian military units stationed in Georgia, which had been ordered to thwart any attempts to seize by force military and civil facilities."³⁷ Grachev called on the State Council of Georgia to repeal its decision and hold bilateral intergovernment talks on the status of the Russian troops remaining in Georgia agreements.

In this dispute, a whole array of the motives emerged: the desire to put pressure on the Russian leadership to support Georgia, the desire to tip the balance of power in its favor by seizing Russian military hardware, the discontent brought about by the presence of the Russian forces, limiting the freedom of action for the conflicting sides, Russia's fears that the transfer of weaponry (until at least agreement was reached on temporary cease fire) might contribute to the escalation of the situation and create additional problems for Moscow, and others. On the other hand, Moscow's promise to transfer its military hardware and property was used as an inducement to persuade the Georgian side to agree to a compromise.

The inclusion of the issue on the transfer of weaponry and property of the Russian army into a package of agreements regarding the settlement of the conflict showed a new approach of the Russian leadership toward managing conflicts. Before that, the prevailing opinion was that the division or transfer of military equipment in conflict zones was fraught with grave consequences for Russia.

Soon after this decision was made by the Georgian leadership, the Abkhaz forces launched an offensive on the morning of October 6 and entered Gudauta and Leselidze, moving out to the Russian border. About 200 Georgian servicemen from among the retreating troops of the State Council of Georgia crossed the border river of Psou, surrendered weapons to the Russian side, were declared interned, and were sent to Tbilisi.

The crisis was managed, but new clashes continued to arise. On the night of November 2, a 200-strong Georgian armed formation, with the support

of five infantry combat vehicles, seized a Russian ammunition depot in the town of Akhaltsikhe and started to take artillery and rocket projectiles and cartridges for machine and submachine guns. Russian Defense Minister P. Grachev made a statement to the effect that Russia might use force if the seized weaponry were not returned. Shevardnadze, for whom this action probably came as a surprise, denounced it, and both sides agreed to return the ammunition. An opinion was expressed that the seizure was undertaken by the Georgian military in order to destabilize the situation on the eve of the opening of the Parliament's first session, where the issue on the government was to be solved. This action demonstrated that the military could carry out uncontrolled actions, which in fact took place in many republics of the former Soviet Union where internal conflicts flared up. Despite a sharp statement by the Russian defense minister the incident was settled with a compromise, since neither the Russian military nor Russian politicians wanted to worsen relations with the Georgian leadership. Warehouses with military uniforms were handed over to Georgia, and ammunition was divided by decision of a special commission: rocket projectiles were returned to the Russian army and artillery shells to Georgia. Observers noted that the situation was unclear and thought that the incident emerged as a result of a failed collusion between the Georgian and Russian military, since such deals and incidents were common before as well.

However, relations worsened, and Georgia ever more frequently made accusations against the Russian forces. On October 16 the Russian Foreign Ministry presented a memorandum to the Georgian minister of foreign relations which said that an anti-Russian campaign had been launched in the republic, that there was a threat to the lives of some Russian citizens, in particular, the Russian border guards. Some Russian planes with humanitarian aid on board were fired on. Later a Russian helicopter with refugees on board was shot down. The Georgian deputies of the Abkhaz Parliament accused Russia of "conducting an undeclared war against Georgia." In this connection, the Russian Foreign Ministry made another statement in early November to the effect that the Russian army had remained neutral in the zone of conflict.

Attacks and attempts to seize weapons continued in December. On January 22, 1993, Russian television informed about a new attack on the base of Russian border guards in Tbilisi, as a result of which two servicemen were killed and many weapons seized. This took place on the eve of a new round of talks on the drafting of an agreement on the status of the Russian troops staying on the territory of Georgia, thus complicating diplomatic efforts.

The Georgian-Abkhazian conflict appears, nevertheless, to be the only occasion when Russian servicemen took part in military operations on the side of one of the conflicting groupings—in this case the Abkhazian one. In some cases this was justified by the Georgian attack on Russian military

object (seismic laboratory in the village of Eshery, an aerodrome), in others it was denied altogether, occurring, apparently, not on orders from Moscow but at the initiative of certain military-political circles. On the nights of October 3 and 4, 1993, the Georgian TV center showed a former St. Petersburg archaeologist, who represented a commercial firm in Abkhazia that supplied arms there, and was taken prisoner by the Georgians. The archaeologist also spoke of Russian soldiers' direct participation in the war on Abkhazia's side, in particular in the capacity of sighters of combat missiles for shooting down aircraft.

Another conflict-generating moment was the participation of Russian volunteers and mercenaries in ethnic conflicts on the territory of the former Soviet Union. Two groups of Russian citizens were distinguished among these volunteers: the Cossacks, especially actively fighting as part of Transdnistria units in Moldova (according to the reports of news agencies about 1,000 Cossack volunteers fought on Serbian side in early 1993), and representatives of north Caucasian peoples sent by the Confederation of Mountain Peoples of the Caucasus to fight on the Abkhaz side. Russian mercenaries fought in both the Armenian and Azerbaijani armies and virtually in all other armies of the former Soviet republics (especially pilots and tankmen). Armenia took prisoner Russian, Ukrainian, and Chechen mercenaries. A Russian pilot fighting on the Azerbaijani side admitted that he became a mercenary particularly because of high pay.

On September 15 at a press conference at the Ministry of Defense of Azerbaijan, six saboteurs were presented who had been recruited by the Armenian forces from the 7th Russian Army stationed in Armenia. They were entrusted with the task of destroying bridges and other lines of communication. Five of them admitted that they had taken part in combat operations in Nagorno-Karabakh on the Armenian side, which, according to the conference organizers, refuted the statement of the Armenian authorities that only Armenian volunteers fought in Nagorno-Karabakh.

The participation of some Russian recruits in combat operations between the conflicting parties was interpreted in the zone of conflict not as their private matter but as evidence of "imperial ambitions" on the part of Moscow. In these conditions, the Russian authorities came to the conclusion that a law needed to be passed prohibiting such practices, though its implementation would not be easy.

The Russian authorities and the Russian troops stationed in the conflict zones find themselves in a complicated situation when a threat to Russian citizens' lives emerges. In late 1992—early 1993 such a threat confronted Russian villages (long settled by sect Molokans) located in the border area between Azerbaijan and Armenia. The bombing of these villages caused a sharp reaction of the Russian government. On January 6, 1993, the Russian Federation Foreign Ministry demanded that Azerbaijan stop shelling these

villages. But can such development of events cause Russia's involvement in the conflict?

According to an opinion supported by some politicians, it is not fully legitimate for a state to deal with human rights issues concerning its peoples living beyond its national boundaries. In particular, this opinion is supported by Francis Fukuyama, who also notes that the United States has no right to teach other nations how to tackle this issue. Fukuyama is right only in part: one can agree with him if the protection of compatriots' interests is used as a pretext for intervention. However, it is hard to imagine how a state, especially a great power, can remain indifferent to the fate of its compatriots abroad. Naturally, it would be preferable to solve issues connected with the guarantee of these rights on the basis of bilateral or multilateral agreements. However, the policy of exerting political and economic pressure is a universal means. Moreover, in this case we speak about a particular situation: before 1991 the former USSR was a unitarian state. Even now, the states that have emerged after its disintegration have more than borders in common.

At the summit of the heads of the CIS member countries in Minsk on January 22, 1993, an attempt was made to encourage integration. Despite the fact that three states did not sign the CIS charter (Ukraine, Turkmenistan, and Moldova) and that some signatories expressed disagreement concerning a number of its provisions (Belorussia refused to put its signature under the paragraph dealing with the protection of borders, and Uzbekistan about human rights), all supporters of integration scored a number of victories. Thus, in accordance with the agreements on the joint protection of borders, five battalions of border guards from the republics that signed the document were sent to the Tajik-Afghan border. This was meant to reduce the threat of crossing the border by armed groups of the opposition who fled to Afghanistan.

In the future the Russian army will probably continue to play an important peace-keeping role in ethnic conflicts in the former USSR. Taking into account the fact that more often than not the conflicting sides appeal to the world community, one may presume that in case of the consent of the other states to take part in the peace-keeping mission, the best option for Russia is for Russian troops to form part of a CIS or an international peace-keeping force on the basis of a mandate given by the world community.

NOTES

1. C. R. Mitchell, "Classifying Protracted Intra-national Asymmetry and Conflict Resolution (paper presented to American-Soviet colloquium on regional conflicts, Bologna, April, 1990), pp. 3-4.

2. See *ibid.*, p. 6.

3. V. Tishkov, "Inventions and Manifestations of Ethnonationalism in Soviet Academic and Public Discourse (paper presented to international colloquium on ethnic problems, Luxembourg, January 1992).

4. One cannot but agree with Francis Fukuyama: "The rights of Russians living in the east of Ukraine could be protected only if the regime in Kiev determined citizenship on the territorial, but not ethnic or linguistic principle and if it gave up forced Ukrainization," F. Fukuyama, "Vagueness of 'national' interest,"—*Nezavisimaya Gazeta*, Moscow, October 16, 1992.

5. Mitchell, op. cit., p. 2.

6. V. Mukomel, E. Pain, and A. Popov, "The Union Disintegrated—Internationality Conflicts Remained," *Nezavisimaya Gazeta*, Moscow, January 10, 1992.

7. Ibid.

8. Ibid.

9. See the explanation of Pruitt and Rubin: Dean Pruitt and Jeffrey Rubin, *Social Conflict: Escalation, Statement and Settlement* (New York: Random House, 1986), pp. 27–35.

10. William Zartman, "Systems of World Order and Regional Conflict Reduction" (paper presented to American-Soviet colloquium on regional conflicts, Bologna, May 1991).

11. *Pravda*, Moscow, May 7, 1992.

12. *Izvestiya*, Moscow, August 27, 1992.

13. According to information of ITAR-TASS, August 24, 1992.

14. *Nezavisimaya Gazeta*, August 13, 1992.

15. Ibid., October 17, 1992.

16. *Komsomolskaya Pravda*, Moscow, September 4, 1992.

17. *Nezavisimaya Gazeta*, December 23, 1992.

18. Ibid., September 16, 1993.

19. Ibid., September 19, 1992.

20. E. Ambartsumov, "Russia as a Great Power: From Megalomania to Common Sense," *Literaturnaya Gazeta*, no. 44, October 28, 1992.

21. Ibid.

22. *Nezavisimaya Gazeta*, November 28, 1992.

23. Ibid.

24. Speech on Russian television on January 23, 1993.

25. Ambartsumov, cf. 19.

26. *Komsomolskaya Pravda*, October 7, 1992.

27. *Nezavisimaya Gazeta*, October 16, 1992.

28. *Izvestia*, October 13, 1992.

29. *Nezavisimaya Gazeta*, January 12, 1993.

30. *Izvestia*, October 1, 1993.

31. *Vecherniy Tbidlisi*, February 4, 1993.

32. *Izvestia*, August 14, 1992.

33. *Nezavisimaya Gazeta*, August 19, 1992.

34. Ambartsumov, cf. 19.

35. *Argumenti i facti*, Moscow, no. 1 (January 1993).

36. *Kuranty*, Moscow, November 19, 1922.

37. *Izvestia*, October 5, 1992.

Conclusion

The new states of Central Asia and Transcaucasia are at a crucial point in their history. In both regions, ethnicity has an impact on politics, often revealing itself in highly antagonistic forms. Both the level of conflict and the way it erupts depend on many factors, which vary among countries—for example, an economic crisis, a nontitular ethnos living en masse in a country, or the fragmented structure of the titular ethnos. A changing geopolitical situation can alleviate or worsen tensions. Domestic or external conflict stimulants also play a different role in every country of the two regions, from a great dependence of ethnic conflict on external factors in Tajikistan to a very modest role played by outside factors in Turkmenistan. Despite major differences in the two regions and their constituent nations, they still have much in common, and their conflicts overlap, influencing one another and affecting neighboring regions (especially the Russian Federation's autonomies in the North Caucasus).

With Transcaucasia torn by ethnic clashes, Central Asia demonstrates a certain inclination toward integration (although in Transcaucasia, too, despite fierce fighting there, attempts are being made to build a "Caucasian home"). The two regions' dependence on Russia and a massive ethnic Russian presence, plus the presence of Russian troops combine to explain the growing importance of the "Russian factor."

Ethnic or quasi-ethnic conflicts between the two regions' countries weaken the nations concerned and hinder their emergence from the crisis induced by the disintegration of the unitary USSR. When these conflicts turn into armed clashes, they entail grave consequences for the nations in question. A case at hand is Tajikistan, where an internecine war has claimed about

60,000 lives and turned 500,000 people into refugees, and where economic damage runs into hundreds of billions of rubles.

Among the adverse consequences of ethnic conflicts in Central Asia and Transcaucasia is a slowing of political reform. This process has the following main manifestations.

In the republics where democratization has advanced to a relatively greater extent, it has led to the emergence of an opposition to the local authorities that had their roots in the communist structures, with national radicals and religious fundamentalists being at the head of the opposition forces. In the prevailing situation, the fruits of democracy can be eagerly seized by those forces, whose emergence in power would have hardly helped their countries toward democracy. All structures of government have become weaker, unable to counter violence (this applies to a lesser extent to Russia, where soaring crime is used by the advocates of "strong government" as a pretext to call for a curb on democracy). What is inevitable for a traditionally fragmented Oriental society is the politicization of interclan, interethnic, and intergroup rivalry, which reveals itself, among other things, in the community-clan character of new political parties and movements, facilitating the merger of interethnic, or quasi-ethnic, and political confrontation. In its turn, this is used by the old elite to suppress democracy and monopolize power. There is an unmistakable trend toward authoritarianism and limits on the freedom of the mass media. In republics where the opposition movement existed but in a nascent form, its development was terminated.

The danger of proliferation of ethnic conflicts and the threat of fundamentalists and national radicals coming to power are used by various political forces, notably by those of conservative-pragmatic spectrum, to justify a rollback of democratization. If the point at issue is a curb on such fundamentals of democracy as the freedom of speech or human rights, for a time, to be followed by democratization or temporary emergency measures to stabilize the situation in areas of acute confrontation between ethnic or local-cultural groups, this can be seen as something unavoidable. However, if authoritarian and even totalitarian trends grow and there emerges the prospect of dictatorships of a pattern one can find in the Middle East, this will not help former Soviet eastern republics from the crisis or prevent the growth of interethnic and other tensions that endanger stability. In the existing situation, the criminalization of the elite can spawn mafia-like regimes in some republics.

The environmental consequences of armed conflicts in the southern tier of the former USSR are unpredictable. Hostilities, terrorism, or mere non-compliance with industrial and technological routines can provoke local chemical and radiation material-handling plants, heavy weapons, and nuclear and hydraulic power stations to produce an environmentally destructive effect on the huge Euro-Asian continent. When in February 1993 the

president of Armenia raised the question of relaunching a local nuclear power station in the republic, suffering an acute power deficit as a result of economic blockade, this news greatly alarmed Armenia's neighbors and other states because there is no guarantee of the station's safe operation.

Most countries in Central Asia and Transcaucasia want outside forces to help them solve their conflicts. They differ in their attitude to the choice of partners in peacekeeping efforts. Central Asia is not inclined to extensive internationalization of such efforts and is not afraid of appealing to Russia for help. Transcaucasia was more disposed toward interference by the West and international and regional organizations and alliances (UN, CSCE, NATO) and until summer of 1993 strived to limit the role of Russia, sometimes doubting its impartiality. However, international organizations have not shown much interest in putting local conflicts under control, and their efforts have not been fruitful. When G. A. Aliyev came to power in Azerbaijan, the Georgians were defeated in Abkhazia, and the two states entered the CIS, their attitude toward the role of Moscow became more positive.

If Russia gets rid of its imperial ambitions, and its democratic government can control those Russian forces that pursue their own goals in ethnic conflicts, its role as a peace-keeper can be welcomed by all parties involved in them.

To prevent new conflicts in the post-Soviet territory and the escalation of smoldering ones, the world community should evaluate and monitor developments there. Considering the potential danger of ethnic conflicts for peace and stability in this vast region, more attention should be devoted to the economic problems of the CIS, including Russia, since economic difficulties aggravate social and ethnic tensions. If a conflict has grown into armed hostility, the parties concerned should familiarize themselves with the international experience of the resolution of regional and ethnic conflicts and the practical aspects of the negotiation process. A conflict should be contained within the smallest possible area to prevent its spread beyond the regional framework or involvement of new forces. Discouragement of weapons supplies to conflict-ridden countries would help reduce tensions.

Due to its contacts with Central Asia and Transcaucasia, its special interest in stability there, and its diversified potential, Russia could be an effective stabilizer and broker to try to reconcile parties in a conflict. Conflicts inside Russia itself have a painful effect on these regions, often facilitating conflicts there. Obviously, the West wants to see Russia as a zone of stability and an effective peacekeeper. Toward this end, Russian reforms should be assisted, and Russia should be helped to join in coordinated international peacemaking efforts. In certain situations, Russia's peacemaking potential should be exploited. Capable of influencing regional situations, Russia can act at least through four channels: the CIS, CSCE, Russo-US partnership and Euro-Asian cooperation (for instance, by coordinating its efforts with Turkey, Iran, China, and other neighbors). Apart from diplomatic efforts,

military leverage can be required. This is evidenced by the agreements on joint peace-keeping efforts and counteraction to extremism signed by Russian Defense Minister Pavel Grachev and the commander in chief of the NATO forces in Europe, John Shalikashvili, during the latter's visit to Russia. Russia's intent to switch part of its military effort to peace-keeping in partnership with the West inspires optimism. However, developments have often dispersed illusions with regard to purely military methods' ability to resolve a conflict. As for a protracted Armenian-Azeri conflict, its parties have failed to demonstrate they want peace and in the beginning of 1994 were still engaged in a fierce struggle in Nagorno-Karabakh. The way to a breakthrough in such situations presupposes a strong influence to be exerted on both sides in the conflict.

In the short term, Central Asia and Transcaucasia will experience severe trials. Much will depend on the manner and direction of the world community and international relations.

Appendix

Chronicle of Main Political Events in Regions of the “New” East (1985–1993)

IRINA A. KOSTYUKOVA

March (1985) Plenum of the CPSU Central Committee	Election of Mikhail Gorbachev, general secretary of the CPSU.
June 1989	First Congress of the USSR People's Deputies.
August 19–21, 1991	August putsch in Moscow.
Second half of 1991	Disintegration of the USSR and formation of the CIS.

THE CAUCASUS-TRANSCAUCASIAN REGION

July 1, 1985	Election of J. Patiashvili as first secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Georgia.
Beginning of 1987	The Chenlibel Azerbaijan patriotic society was set up in Baku.
October–November 1987	First demonstrations of people from Nagorno-Karabakh Autonomous Region took place in Yerevan.
February 20, 1988	The decision of the regional session of the soviet of people's deputies of Nagorno-Karabakh on joining Armenia.
Late February and early March 1988	First clashes on ethnic grounds in Nagorno-Karabakh. Pogroms of Armenians in Sumgait.

This chapter was compiled on the basis of newspapers and periodicals for 1985–1993: *Izvestia*, *Megapolis-Express*, *Moskovskiy Novosti*, *Nezavisimaya Gazeta*, *Novoye Vremya*, *Pravda* and others.

Spring 1988	Azerbaijanians leave Armenia and Karabakh. Emergence of the Armenian National Movement (ANM). The Karabakh Committee was set up in Armenia. Suren Arutyunyan was elected first secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Armenia.
July 18, 1988	The Presidium of the USSR Supreme Soviet adopted a decision on the preservation of the existing territorial borders of Armenia and Azerbaijan.
September 1988	Armenians attacked the Azerbaijan population in Khodzhalı and Stepanakert. In reply, the Armenians were driven out from Shusha.
November 1988	Anti-Armenian demonstrations and riots took place in many cities of Azerbaijan. The state of emergency and curfew were introduced in Baku and twelve cities of the republic in December. The aggravation of a political situation in Georgia. First mass hunger strikes are staged near the Government House.
1988	J. Ioseliani creates an armed organization, Mkhedrioni. A crisis begins in South Ossetia.
January–February 1989	Nagorno-Karabakh is placed under the guidance of the Committee of the Special Administration. Demonstrations and other actions are taking place in Azerbaijan and Armenia demanding the release of the previously arrested leaders of the national movements.
March–April 1989	Numerous meetings and demonstrations in Tbilisi demanded the adoption of the declaration on Georgia's independence, annulment of autonomies, and the withdrawal of the Soviet troops from the republic.
April 9, 1989	Bringing of Soviet troops in Tbilisi. Patiashvili retires.
June 1989	The first election meeting of the national movement of Kabardino-Balkaria was held.
Summer 1989	Setting up of the People's Front of Azerbaijan headed by Abulfaz Aliyev (Elchibei).
July 1989	Armed clashes between Abkhazians and Georgians in Abkhazia.
November 1989	The first congress of the Armenian National Movement.

End of 1989–beginning of 1990	The beginning of open hostilities in Nagorno-Karabakh.
January 13, 1990	Leaders of the People's Front of Azerbaijan declared the creation of the National Defense Council at the meeting in Baku. The aggravation of the situation and the beginning of the Armenian pogroms.
January 20, 1990	Bringing of Soviet troops in Baku. The Council of National Defense was outlawed. Some people were arrested.
January 1990	The state of emergency was declared in Baku. Ayaz Mutalibov was elected president of Azerbaijan.
May 1990	A meeting in Nazran demanding restoration of Ingush autonomy within the boundaries of 1934, before its merging with Chechnya.
July 1990	A political movement of Lezghians, Sadval, which proclaimed the necessity of the establishment of an independent Lezghian state, was set up in Makhachkala.
October 1990	The Second Congress of the Mountain Peoples of the Caucasus took place in Nalchik.
Autumn 1990	A national congress of opposition parties and organizations was set up in Georgia.
December 1990	Nagorno-Karabakh population voted for the republic's independence at a referendum.
January 1991	The state of emergency was declared in South Ossetia. The Georgian authorities kidnapped and arrested T. Kulumbekov, chairman of the Supreme Soviet of South Ossetia. (He was released after Gamsakhurdia was deposed.)
End of April–beginning of May 1991	The Soviet troops and Azerbaijan interior forces conducted several operations to disarm and eliminate illicit armed formations on the territory of Nagorno-Karabakh. Sharp aggravation of the situation. Armenians shelled Shusha.
May 1991	Zviad Gamsakhurdia was elected president of Georgia.
End of August 1991	The Declaration of Independence of Armenia. Elections to the parliament. The Armenian National Movement comes to power. Levon Ter-Petrosyan becomes president.

August–September 1991	The state of emergency was cancelled in Baku. The declaration on restoration of state independence of Azerbaijan.
September 1991	The congress of Lezghin people. The National Congress came to power in Chechen-Ingushetia. B. Yeltsin and N. Nazarbayev visited Armenia and Azerbaijan with a peace mission.
September 2, 1991	The meeting of the National-Democratic Party of Georgia dispersed by armed force.
September 6, 1991	Chechnya declares its independence.
September 8, 1991	Mutalibov's victory at the general presidential elections in Azerbaijan.
September 21, 1991	Armenia's population voted for independence at the referendum.
September 24, 1991	A joint communiqué on Nagorno-Karabakh was signed in Zheleznovodsk with participation of the presidents of Russia, Kazakhstan, Armenia, and Azerbaijan.
Autumn 1991	Aggravation of relations between the Avars and Chechens in Daghestan. The state of emergency was declared in Kazbek District. The third congress of the Mountain Peoples of the Caucasus in Sukhum proclaimed the formation of the Confederation of the Mountain Peoples of the Caucasus. Musa Shanibov became its president. The strike of Kumyks in Daghestan.
October–December 1991	Strikes in Karachai-Circassia for dividing the republic.
October 16, 1991	Levon Ter-Petrossyan was elected president of Armenia.
October 21, 1991	The beginning of another round of negotiations between Armenia and Azerbaijan on Nagorno-Karabakh.
October 27, 1991	General Johar Dudayev was elected president of the Chechen Republic.
November 1991	The Ingush population came out for a sovereign Ingush republic.
December 1991	The congress of the Kabardin people, which took place in Nalchik, adopted a decision to restore the state of Kabardins.
December 9, 1991	Heads of eleven republics meet in Minsk.
December 22, 1991	Georgia's opposition under the leadership of T. Kitovani and J. Ioseliani began open hostilities against Z. Gamsakhurdia and his supporters.

Beginning of 1992	Clashes of interests between Chechnya and Ingushetia in the frontier Sunzhen District. A. Dzharimov elected president of Adygei at the national elections.
January 1992	The population of South Ossetia voted at the referendum for the republic's independence and its joining the Russian Federation. Power in Georgia goes to the Military Council headed by Commander of the National Guards T. Kitovani and leader of the Mkhedroni J. Ioseliani. President Gamsakhurdia is removed from power.
January–June 1992	Attempts by Gamsakhurdia's supporters in western Georgia to return the ex-president to power.
January 28, 1992	An Azerbaijanian helicopter was shot down with a missile over Nagorno-Karabakh. Forty people perished.
February 5–6, 1992	A meeting on Nagorno-Karabakh was called in Baku at the initiative of the People's Front of Azerbaijan.
January–February 1992	Attacks on Russian cantonments in Chechnya.
February 1992	The defense ministry of Armenia started the formation of a regular national army. Foreign minister of Iran A. Velayati tries to help in the settlement of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict.
February 20, 1992	Talks between foreign ministers of Armenia and Azerbaijan took place in Moscow with Russia's mediation.
February 28, 1992	Armenian units took by storm the town of Khodzhal in Karabakh.
End of February 1992	Georgia began the formation of the national army.
March 5–6, 1992	A. Mutalibov retires as president of Azerbaijan. Adoption of the law on transferring the Chechen language from the Cyrillic alphabet to the Latin one. Aggravation of relations between Dudayev and the opposition. The congress of the progressive-democratic union of Abkhazia took place in Sukhumi. It united in its ranks representatives of the Georgian population of the republic.
April 25, 1992	The Russian interior troops are withdrawn from the territory of South Ossetia.

April 1992	The setting up of a new parliament on a parity basis from deputies of Azerbaijan's Supreme Soviet.
May 14–15, 1992	The Supreme Soviet of Azerbaijan brings A. Mutalibov back to power for twenty-four hours.
Early summer 1992	The seizure by the Azerbaijan Army of the north of Nagorno-Karabakh.
June 1992	The national referendum in Daghestan came out against the introduction of the presidential post and private property on land.
June 7, 1992	Abulfaz Elchibei, leader of the People's Front of Azerbaijan, was elected president of Azerbaijan.
June 10, 1992	A Georgian-Ossetian protocol on a cease-fire was signed.
June 24, 1992	An attempted coup d'état in Tbilisi.
July 3, 1992	The Law of the Russian Federation was adopted to set up a transitional period on the state and territorial delimitation of the Russian Federation until July 1, 1995.
July 1992	The peace-keeping troops of Russia, Georgia, and North Ossetia were brought to South Ossetia.
Summer 1992	Under the aegis of the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe, four rounds of an emergency meeting to settle the conflict around Nagorno-Karabakh and prepare a conference in Minsk took place in Rome.
July 23, 1992	The Supreme Soviet of Abkhazia made a decision to return to the Constitution of 1921 (genuine independence).
August 14, 1992	Invasion by the Georgian Defense Ministry forces of Abkhazia. Hostilities in Abkhazia began.
August 1992	Ministers of foreign affairs of Armenia and Azerbaijan discussed the Nagorno-Karabakh problem in Alma-Ata.
September 3, 1992	E. Shevardnadze, B. Yeltsin, and V. Ardzinba discussed peace terms in Abkhazia but did not reach an agreement. Representatives of the three presidents—Armenia, Azerbaijan, and Kazakhstan—signed a protocol regarding the armistice reached in Alma-Ata.
Autumn 1992	Ingushes demand the return of the Prigorodny District of Ossetia and block roads leading to North Ossetia.

Late September–early October 1992	Mass meetings of protest in Nalchik. Demonstrators demanded the rupture by Kabardino-Balkaria of its relations with the Russian Federation and the formation of an independent Islamic state. The state of emergency was declared in Nalchik, and Musa Shanibov, president of the Congress of the Mountain Peoples of the Caucasians, was arrested. A meeting was held before the Government House in defense of Shanibov.
September–October 1992	Contradictions between the People's Front of Azerbaijan and the leaders of the Nakhichevan Autonomous Republic, headed by G. Aliyev, aggravated.
October 11, 1992	E. Shevardnadze was elected chairman of the Supreme Soviet of Georgia.
October 31, 1992	Ingush combat formations began hostilities in the Prigorodny District of North Ossetia.
November 1, 1992	A state of emergency was declared in North Ossetia and Ingushetia.
November 10–11, 1992	A temporary border was established between Chechnya and Ingushetia.
November 1992	Russian troops and Ossetian combat formations force out Ingushes from the Prigorodny District.
January 1993	Hostilities in Abkhazia. A guerrilla war. Russia tried to organize a roundtable of the main national movements of the North Caucasus and representatives of the federal center.
January–April 1993	Heavy defeats of the Azerbaijan army in the north of Nagorny Karabakh.
January 26, 1993	The explosion of the gas main in the Marneulsky district in Georgia resulted in full discontinuation of gas supply to Armenia.
End of January 1993	Retirement of Prime Minister of Azerbaijan R. Guseinov, one of the close friends of ex-President A. Mutalibov (was appointed on May 14, 1992).
February 1, 1993	The republic's custom-house began functioning in Kabardino-Balkaria.
February 2, 1993	Khosrov Arutyunyan was released from his duties as head of the cabinet of ministers of Armenia.
February 28, 1993	Ruslan Aushev was elected the first president of the Ingush Republic.

February–March 1993	Trench war in Abkhazia.
February 1993	A meeting of representatives from sixty-six public movements, parties, and organizations of the Northern Caucasus was held in Nalchik to assist the settling of the situation in the region.
March 2, 1993	An act of terrorism in the Marneulsky district of Georgia occasioned an explosion of the gas main through which fuel is supplied to Armenia, the fourth such explosion in the past month and a half.
March 6, 1993	The Supreme Soviet of the North Ossetian Republic adopted a decision recognizing the independence of the Republic of South Ossetia.
Mid-March 1993	The Abkhazian military units made an unsuccessful attempt at the greatest massed storming of Sukhumi since the beginning of the conflict.
March 23, 1993	Armenia found itself in a critical situation as regards to electric power supply due to the explosion of the railway bridge across the Khromi river.
March 27, 1993	The state of emergency was prolonged throughout the territory of the Prigorodny district in North Ossetia and the adjoining localities of Ossetia and Ingushetia.
March 30, 1993	The Law on the Language was adopted in Armenia.
March 1993	Successful completion of the winter campaign conducted by the self-defense forces of the Nagorno-Karabakh Republic on the Mardakertsky front.
Early April 1993	Armenia captured the Kelbadzharsky district of Azerbaijan. A state of emergency was declared on the entire territory of Azerbaijan, and headquarters were set up to recruit volunteers.
April 14, 1993	The mixed commission to settle the Ossetian-Ingush conflict held its first meeting.
Mid-April 1993	An Opposition Parties' Council was created in Azerbaijan.
April 27–28, 1993	Representatives of the Confederation of the Peoples of the Caucasus and of the Union of Cossacks of the South of Russia had a round-table meeting in Stavropol.

April 1993

The situation in the Ossetian-Ingush conflict zone remained tense.

THE KAZAKHSTAN-CENTRAL ASIAN REGION

November 2, 1985

M. A. Masaliyev was elected first secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Kyrgyzia.

December 21, 1985

S. A. Niyazov was elected first secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Turkmenia.

December 1986

G. Kolbin was elected first secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Kazakhstan. This resulted in mass demonstrations in Alma-Ata under the slogan, "Each people needs its leader."

1987

A. Akayev holds the post of vice-president of the Academy of Sciences of Kyrgyzia. (From 1985 he worked as deputy head of the department of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Kyrgyzia).

Late February 1989

Demonstrations of students and other young people in Dushanbe, supported by the city population and directed against the leadership of the republic and its social policy, took place.

June 23, 1989

I. N. Karimov is elected first secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Uzbekistan.

June 1989

Mass riots in Fergana (Uzbekistan), directed mainly against Meskhetian Turks. Riots on ethnic grounds in Novy Uzen (Guryev Region, Kazakhstan): Kazakhs demand the expulsion of all people of the Caucasian origin. There were armed attacks. Illicit seizure of lands in the outskirts of Frunze (Bishkek) in Kyrgyzia began.

First half of 1989

The setting up of a national opposition movement, Rastokhez (Revival), in Tajikistan.

1989

The Birlik people's movement of Uzbekistan was in the process of creation.

February 1990

Antigovernment demonstrations in Dushanbe accompanied by mass riots and armed attacks.

Winter–spring 1990	A wave of meetings in Frunze against Kyrgyzia's leadership.
May 1990	The formation of the Kyrgyzstan democratic movement.
June 1990	Ethnic clashes in the Osh Region of Kyrgyzia. No fewer than 5,000 people were killed, of whom 4,500 were Uzbeks.
Summer 1990	The Democratic party of Tajikistan was formed.
Autumn 1990	S. Niyazov was elected president of Turkmenistan. A. Akayev was elected president of the Kyrgyz Republic.
March 1991	A founding congress of the Akzyberlik ("Unity") people's movement took place.
June 1991	The draft union treaty was approved in Kazakhstan.
August 31, 1991	Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan proclaimed their independence.
September 1991	The Supreme Soviet of Tajikistan adopted the declaration of independence. The resignation of K. Makhkamov, chairman of the Supreme Council of Tajikistan.
September 23, 1991	P. Nabyev was elected chairman of the Supreme Council of Tajikistan. The state of emergency was declared in Dushanbe. (The situation was aggravated by the confrontation of communists and the opposition forces.)
October 12, 1991	Akayev was elected president of Kyrgyzstan.
October 27, 1991	Turkmenistan proclaimed independence.
November 1991	Nabyev won at the presidential elections in Tajikistan.
December 1991	A founding conference of the Democratic Party of Turkmenistan took place. A. Akayev headed the government of Kyrgyzstan. I. Karimov was elected president of Uzbekistan. N. Nazarbayev was elected president of Kazakhstan.
January 1992	Students riot in Tashkent.
January–February 1992	Riots in the Namangan Region of Uzbekistan (a conflict between representatives of Islamic self-administration and President Karimov).
March–April 1992	Mass meetings and demonstrations in Tajikistan. Confrontation between supporters and opponents of the president.

April 1992	The meeting of opposition forces in Dushanbe presented the president with an ultimatum.
April 10, 1992	The session of the Supreme Soviet of the Gorno-Badakhshan Autonomous Region of Tajikistan adopted a declaration on the formation of the Pamir-Badakhshan Autonomous Republic.
May 1992	The Civil Concord parliamentary opposition group was set up in the parliament of Kazakhstan.
May 11–13, 1992	The government of national concord was created in Tajikistan. An opposition leader, D. Usmon, was appointed vice-premier. Opposition supporters made up one-third of the new cabinet of ministers.
June 1992	A meeting of national democratic parties and movements took place before the government building of Kazakhstan. Combat formations of opposition and forces loyal to the president clashed in the south of Tajikistan.
August 31, 1992	Tajik opposition occupied the government building and demanded the resignation of President Nabiyeu.
September 7, 1992	President Nabiyeu was removed from power. Akbarsho Iskandarov became acting chairman of the Supreme Council of Tajikistan.
September 27, 1992	Kulyab troops, loyal to President Nabiyeu, seized the town of Kurgan-Tyube.
October 1992	Former Minister of Foreign Affairs of Turkmenistan Avdykumov expressed his intention to form a shadow cabinet in the republic. A new national-democratic Azat party was created in Kazakhstan on the basis of the Azat national movement and the Zholtoksan party of Kazakh nationalists.
November 1992	A new Tajik government was formed. A. Abdullojanov was appointed prime minister. I. Rakhmonov was elected speaker.
December 1992–January 1993	A scandal in Kyrgyzstan concerning a sale of weapons to Tajikistan that is sanctioned by the republic's Vice-President Felix Kulov.
December 1, 1992	An agreement on bringing peacekeeping forces of the Commonwealth of Independent States to Tajikistan was made public.

End of 1992	The law on the state status of the Kyrgyz language was adopted in Kyrgyzstan.
January 1993	A massive renewal of the government and of the president's entire team took place in Kazakhstan. The Uzbek parliament suspended the activities of the popular opposition movement "Birlik." The well-known human-rights supporter A. Pulatov appeared in court.
January 1, 1993	The enactment in Turkmenistan of the decree of the republic's President, S. Niyazov, on the free use by the population for everyday needs of electrical energy, water, and natural and liquefied gas.
Early January 1993	The state of emergency regime and curfew were imposed in many districts of Tajikistan. Proceedings were instituted against the leaders of the opposition.
January 4-6, 1993	At a conference in Tashkent heads of four Central Asian republics and Kazakhstan united in the Commonwealth of Central Asian states.
January 6, 1993	A conference of the leaders of the republics of Central Asia and Kazakhstan in Tashkent. The creation was announced of a union of Central Asian states.
January 7-8, 1993	The state of emergency and the curfew were declared in Dushanbe and some other regions of Tajikistan.
January 28, 1993	A new Constitution was adopted in Kazakhstan.
Late January 1993	President N. Nazarbayev of Kazakhstan announced the return to state planning in the economy.
March 26, 1993	A conference of the heads of state of the Central Asian countries and the Russian Federation on the Aral Sea problems.
April 11, 1993	Death of the former President of Tajikistan, R. Nabiyeu.

THE VOLGA-URALS REGION

February 1989	The creation of the Tatar Public Center (TPC). The TPC radical wing turned into the national Ittifak party, headed by F. Bairamova.
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September 1989	G.I. Usmanov, first secretary of the Tatar Regional Communist Party Committee, upheld the necessity of transforming Tatarstan into a union republic at the plenum of the CPSU Central Committee.
August 30, 1990	Tatarstan adopted a declaration on sovereignty where the supremacy of all Tatar laws over Russian Federation laws was proclaimed.
October 11, 1990	The declaration on state sovereignty of the republic was proclaimed at the Supreme Soviet of Bashkiria.
May 1991	A founding meeting of the Sovereignty of Bashkiria people's movement took place in Ufa.
June 1991	M. Shaimiyev was elected president of Tatarstan.
Late August 1991	Aggravation of Russo-Tatar relations in Kazan.
October 1991	The Supreme Soviet of Tatarstan adopted a resolution approving the republic's independence.
December 1991	The session of the Tatar Supreme Soviet adopted a decision on joining the Commonwealth of Independent States as a founder.
February 1992	The session of the Supreme Soviet of Kalmykia adopted a resolution on changing the name of the republic (the Republic of Kalmykia, Khalmg Tangch). The session considered unacceptable those items of the Russian Federation draft constitution that concern the rights and powers of the republics, territories, and regions. The first Tatar kurultai (assembly) in Kazan spoke for Tatarstan's independence. A <i>milli-mejlis</i> (national congress) set up in the republic proclaimed itself to be in opposition to the government.
March 13, 1992	The Constitutional Court of the Russian Federation decided that the Tatar Supreme Soviet resolution on holding a referendum in the republic on its state status does not correspond to the Constitution of the Russian Federation.
March 19, 1992	Russia's Supreme Soviet resolved that the results of the referendum in Tatarstan would not have legal force. Boris Yeltsin addressed the people of Tatarstan.

March 21, 1992	The referendum in Tatarstan came out for the republic's independence.
July 17, 1992	A decision of the Russian Supreme Soviet cancelled the laws of the republics of Bashkortostan and Tatarstan on drawing up their budgets.
October 27, 1992	The Supreme Soviet of Bashkortostan declared a moratorium until 1995 on holding elections at all levels.
Autumn 1992	The Muslim Board of Tatarstan and Bashkortostan was formed. An attempt was made to secede from the Muslim Board of Europe and Siberia. But the latter did not recognize the new board.
April 25, 1993	At an all-Russian referendum, the people of Bashkortostan voted for the republic's economic independence and contractual relations with Russia. The referendum failed in Tatarstan, where only 22 percent of the population took part in the voting.

SAYANO-BAIKAL REGION

May 1990	The People's Front was founded in Tuva. Bichei Ool became its leader.
Summer 1990	Russian villages and Russian population were attacked in Tuva.
December 1990	A Declaration on State Sovereignty was adopted in Tuva. It was approved by the Russian parliament on July 3, 1991.
October 1991	The Tuva Supreme Soviet elected a new chairman, Kaadyr-ool Bicheldey, who thinks that Tuva could become an independent state in the future. The Supreme Soviet of Buryatia approved the draft of the federation treaty.
March 1992	Chairman of the Council of Ministers of Tuva Sherig-ool Oorzhak became president of the republic.
June 1992	Buryatia introduced private property on land, water, natural resources, and so forth.

October 1992

The Tuva Supreme Soviet did not adopt the draft constitution of this republic, which contradicted the Constitution of the Russian Federation.

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